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Alfred. - Aug. 1871.

Dear Sir,

LETTERS
TO
YOUNG MEN

PREPARING FOR

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

BY WILLIAM COGSWELL, D. D.

Secretary of the American Education Society.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY PERKINS & MARVIN.
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1837.

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P R E F A C E .



THE Author of the following Letters, whose attention, for the last eight years, has been particularly called to the subject of educating pious young men for the Christian ministry, in the discharge of official duties, has frequently had occasion to address many of this class on topics vitally important to them as scholars, Christians, and candidates for the sacred office. Though these letters were originally written expressly and only for the benefit of those individuals thus addressed; yet, at the suggestion of some ministers of the gospel, and several officers of our public institutions, as well as at the urgent

request of many of those to whom they were written, they are now, with little modification, thrown into a public and more permanent form, for the benefit of others also, who are preparing to preach the gospel. That young men in this situation need much familiar and definite instruction on the topics here discussed, will, it is presumed, be universally acknowledged. The book is designed as a friendly companion of such students. Should it be the means of assisting in furnishing for the church, a more pious, learned and efficient ministry, the object of the Author in its publication, will be fully accomplished.

Boston, August, 1837.

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LETTERS TO YOUNG MEN.

LETTER I.

CONSECRATION TO GOD.

DEAR BRETHREN,

My design in this communication and those which follow, is to present some suggestions, the consideration of which may be of assistance to you, in preparing for the great and responsible work of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this first epistle I shall address you on personal holiness or entire consecration to God. I do this because it is a subject respecting which many seem not to possess clear and definite perceptions, and because the consecrating of yourselves to your Maker, Redeemer and Sanctifier, is the first duty you are called upon to perform. Until this is

done, you have taken no step aright in the important work which you have in contemplation.

The term consecration is synonymous with holiness. As the latter word is more biblical and more generally employed in speaking on this subject than the former, so it will here be used.

Holiness, in its primary and scriptural sense, is separateness or distinction on account of pre-eminent excellence, either intrinsic or relative. It is intrinsic when it really exists in an individual. God is intrinsically holy. He is, in his very nature, separated from all other beings by his pre-eminent or supreme excellence; removed at an infinite distance from all natural imperfection, and all moral imperfection or sin,—being perfectly and absolutely pure and upright. Holiness is relative when it belongs to a person or thing, set apart from ordinary use to sacred purposes, such as the service of God. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the tabernacle and its vessels, the priests and their vestments, were relatively holy, and were called holy because consecrated to an excellent use—the service of God. But my object now is to remark particularly on intrinsic holiness, that “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” As this holiness is the same in nature wherever it exists, man to be intrinsically holy,

must be really conformed to God in heart and practice, separate from sin or moral imperfection. By this is not meant, that the holiness of man is equal in degree to the holiness of God. Holiness is a communicable perfection, and no creature possesses it in the same degree and manner that God does. God is eternally holy, the fountain of holiness. Creatures are holy by derivation. God is infinitely holy. Creatures are holy in a finite degree. God is immutably holy. But creatures as it respects holiness, are liable to change.

In order then to be holy,* man must be entirely consecrated to God and his service, in body, soul, time, possessions and influence. All his corporeal and mental faculties must be employed in such a manner as to promote the glory of God and the happiness of his creatures; and they must be thus employed to the highest possible degree. This love and service for his Maker must be graduated only by his natural ability, that is, be entirely commensurate with it. The same may be said of the time allotted to him, the property with which he is intrusted, and the influence he pos-

* In this discussion, I speak of perfection in holiness, of what man ought to be in holiness, and not of what he really is in this respect in the present state of existence; for, alas, no man, not even the most holy, liveth and sinneth not.

sesses. All these must be set apart and appropriated to the exalted purposes of glorifying God and benefiting mankind; and must thus be separated in their use from every thing that is sinful, impure, and unhallowed, and devoted to the highest and most exalted purposes. The whole man, body, soul, and spirit, should be entirely employed in doing the will of Jehovah, in exhibiting his glorious perfections to the view of intelligent creatures, and in promoting their highest possible felicity.

Is man then intrinsically holy? He will be conformed to God in heart, or in his affections. Does God love being in general, and himself supremely; does he delight in the laws he has enacted—their precepts and sanctions, in the government he exercises, in the plan of salvation he has devised, in the means of grace he has appointed, in all his ways towards men? So, if holy, man will. Does God rejoice in the conduct of his friends, is he displeased with the conduct of his enemies, does he hate sin and love holiness, does he desire his own glory and the best good of his creatures? So, if holy, man will. He will possess, in a degree, all the moral excellencies, all the moral affections that God does. He will be assimilated to him in heart, and thus separated from sin, all moral

impurity, and set apart to the most glorious purposes.

Is man intrinsically holy, he will be conformed to God in conduct. He will be actuated by the same motives, have the same objects in view, and co-operate with him in promoting his cause. He will live in obedience to the moral law of God, which is a transcript of his moral perfections, and thus exhibit him to the intelligent universe. That holiness is obedience to the law is most evident. Sin is directly opposed to holiness, and as sin is the transgression of the law, so holiness must be obedience to the law. Now the law of God has respect not merely to the external conduct of man, but also and primarily to the affections of his heart, the true seat of all good and all evil. Obedience then to this law consists in love and its proper fruits. Thus speaks the Apostle : "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Do you ask what love? The Son of God himself shall reply : "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Hence we infer, that holiness consists essentially

in love and its proper fruits. These comprise all good affections and their proper fruits. And hence we learn, that all the Christian graces flow from universal love, or are but love in its different modifications. Such is the nature of personal intrinsic holiness.

A question now occurs—Why is this holiness or sanctity important to be possessed?

1. Unless possessed, no one can be happy in the present life. Holiness is necessary to peace and tranquillity of mind. Without it God himself would be imperfect and miserable. Did he possess the feelings of envy, or malice, or revenge, or hatred, or impatience, or cruelty, or injustice, he would ever be vexed and discontented, and, consequently, unhappy. Nothing can mar one's happiness more, than evil propensities, affections and passions. The destitution of holiness is what produces the misery of unholy men on earth, and of wicked men and devils in hell. They have a temper contrary to God. And such a temper naturally torments and disquiets its possessor. In our evil disposition is laid the very foundation of everlasting misery. Until this disposition be taken away, it is as impossible for a wicked person to be happy, as for a sick man to be at rest. Affectingly striking is the expression of the prophet: "The

wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." "There is no peace saith God, to the wicked."

2. Holiness is essential to happiness in the future life. The soul is immortal, and must be happy or miserable forever, according to the character it possesses. It must exist unless God destroy it; for it can no more annihilate its own faculties or existence, than a mirror can its property of reflecting the rays that fall on its surface. It may render itself wretched by evil dispositions and practices; but it cannot make itself happy even in heaven, while destitute of holiness. The reason of this is obvious. Heaven is a holy place. All beings who reside there are holy. Man, in order to be happy there must be holy too, for the element of heaven is holiness, and how can he be happy unless in his proper element? As a person with no relish for food, cannot feast at the most sumptuous table; so neither could the sinner delight in heaven, where all is holiness. He would pine at the heavenly banquet, for no appetite has he for the entertainment. A holy God would be an object of horror, and his service would be weariness. Does the sinner delight in sin in the present world? In that also will he delight in the world to come. His affections then or heaven must

be changed, or he can never be happy there. Besides, it is the language of inspiration, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,"—shall be admitted into his joyful presence and to the bliss of heaven.

3. Holiness is necessary in order to preparation for the ministry of Christ. As every disciple of Christ should bear and reflect his image; so especially should his ministers be eminently conformed to him in heart and life. They should possess the same affections that he does—be emphatically pastors according to the heart of Jehovah. Personal holiness is indispensable. And being entirely consecrated to God, they will have views and feelings similar to his, and be co-workers with him in the advancement of his cause. In their hearts and lives there will be an exhibition of God in his power and goodness, and thus they will glorify their Maker, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Ministers, without spiritual discernment, would, in the performance of official duties, be like blind men attempting to learn the science of optics, or deaf men pursuing the study of music. Such should never be intrusted with the cure of souls. Of an unholy minister, God may well say: "What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes?" As Balaam prophesied and other

ungodly men have sustained the sacerdotal office, so a graceless minister may preach the truth of God, and perhaps even to the edification of saints and the conversion of sinners; but it will be to their own destruction, like that of Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange fire before the Lord which he commanded them not.

And now, dear brethren, permit me to exhort you to comply with the injunction of your heavenly Father, when he says to his people, "Be ye holy for I am holy." Sanctify yourselves for the work before you—set yourselves apart from every thing that is worldly and sinful to the service of saving souls. "Keep yourselves unspotted from the world," "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts," maintain close communion with God, and exercise a spirit of entire and supreme devotedness to him. Let your principal aim now be to prepare in this respect for the ministry. Strive not only for holiness, but for high attainments in holiness. God calls you to do it, the church calls you to do it, the times in which you live call you to do it. I beseech you take heed to yourselves, lest after preparing to preach, and actually having preached to others, you yourselves should be among those who are cast away.

LETTER II.

CALL TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.

DEAR BRETHREN,

I assume it as a fact, that you have heartily dedicated yourselves to God—set yourselves apart for his service and glory, in body, soul, and spirit; and that you realize you are not your own, having been bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and that therefore, you ought to glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his. With you it is a primary question how you can, in the highest degree and in the best manner, glorify your Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. You feel and pray as did Paul on his conversion,—“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” Your “heart’s desire and prayer to God, is,” that you may learn his will concerning you, and be disposed and enabled to perform it. So

far as you can discover what is duty, you think it is to spend your days in preaching the gospel; and this is the language of your conduct. This probably is the fact. Still you are liable to be deceived, and therefore it becomes you to examine yourselves on this point, that you may not rush into the ministry uncalled.

To assist you in ascertaining the truth on this subject, I shall consider in this letter what constitutes a call to the Christian ministry; whether you have such a call; and if so, what are the reasons why you should preach the gospel; and in what part of your Master's vineyard it is your duty to labor.

I. What constitutes a call to preach the gospel?

In almost every instance where the following things combine in a young man, it is his duty to enter the ministry, namely: respectable talents, decided piety, a desire to preach the gospel from love to Christ and perishing souls, and a literary and theological education, or the pecuniary means to obtain it, possessed either by himself or accessible by him through parents, friends, or some benevolent society. These four things plainly indicate it to be the will of Heaven, that the individuals who possess them should preach the

“unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ.” There may indeed be exceptions, arising from deformity of body, diseased organs, eccentricity of mind, etc.—Moreover, it may be the duty of a young man to preach the gospel, though he has not a desire to do it. He may have the other requisites, and be destitute of this. But as this deficiency is of a moral nature, he is culpable for it, and remains bound to discharge the duty incumbent upon him. So a young man may be destitute of piety, and yet, in the sight of Heaven, be not excused from proclaiming the messages of redeeming love. God views him as under obligation to love and serve him. The same remarks are true in reference to an education for the ministry. God holds us as bound to the performance of what is according to his will, when there is nothing in the way of doing it but moral inability or an indisposition of mind to do it. It is otherwise in regard to natural talents or those bodily and mental faculties which are necessary. In a destitution of these there is no criminality. God does not require brick where he does not furnish straw. If a young man possess not suitable corporeal powers—if there be an uncommon deficiency in these, it is not his duty to preach; if he be not *compos mentis*, or if there be a great deficiency in his powers of perception,

memory, judgment, etc. it is not his duty to preach. But, suppose a young man does possess good natural faculties, but not piety, nor a desire to preach, nor an education; is it his duty to enter the ministry? He should not, indeed, assume the sacred office while destitute of holiness; but he is bound to love God supremely, now and evermore, and to possess the most glowing piety. He should desire to perform what God would have him, and if he would have him preach, proclaim the gospel he should. And if God would have him teach the way of salvation, he should first seek instruction on this subject himself. For it is not a supposable case, that the Most High would send on an embassy to men, one who was ignorant of the message he was to deliver, or the tenor and terms of the treaty of reconciliation and peace he was sent to effect, or the manner in which it was to be accomplished. Where, then, respectable talents, decided piety, a desire to preach the gospel from right motives, and a suitable education for the work, or the pecuniary means to obtain it, concur, or should concur, in a young man, it is ordinarily his duty to preach. These indicate the will of Heaven, constitute a call to enter the ministry, and bind the individual to do it suitably prepared, with the least possible delay.

II. Have you such a call to preach the gospel as has been described ?

A few interrogatories, when properly examined, will determine. Have you, then, those natural powers of body and mind which will, when duly cultivated, enable you to discharge the duties of a minister in a respectable and acceptable manner? This, it is believed, is what is demanded, and all that is demanded, in this respect.

Are you possessed of holiness? Has your heart been renewed by the Holy Ghost, and have you made the entire consecration of yourselves to him which he requires? Is your piety of that decided character which is desirable, or is it fickle, languid, doubtful?

Have you a desire to serve God in the ministry of his Son?—such a desire as, if called to make the sacrifice, will induce you to forsake houses and lands, fathers and brethren, for this arduous service? Do you feel that it will be as your meat and drink to do the will of God in this responsible employment?

Are you determined to pursue a course of education that will qualify you to preach the gospel?—a course that will make you acquainted with the natural sciences and other branches of a liberal education, embracing those languages in which the

Bible was originally written, and especially the Bible itself, that you may become "mighty in the Scriptures" and "scribes well instructed into the kingdom?"

Such are the questions I would propound for your particular and prayerful consideration. If on examination, you can answer them in the affirmative, then you may conclude that you are called of God to preach the gospel, and that, in pursuing your present course of study, you are acting agreeably to his will. But if you are so deficient in natural qualifications, that you would bring yourselves or the cause of Christ into disrepute in attempting to exercise the sacred functions, then it is plainly your duty to relinquish the thought of preparing for the ministry. Or if you do not possess true, vital godliness, and do not maintain that consistent course of religious conduct which a minister of the gospel should maintain, then you ought to abandon your studies till you have repented and reformed. Be sensible, that in these respects you are called of God to the ministry, and then strive to be properly educated for a discharge of its duties.

Let it never be said you have not pecuniary ability to pursue a regular course of instruction for the ministerial work. If you have not funds of

your own, and cannot procure them from parents or friends, you can, from some Education Society and by your own labor, obtain sufficient means to enable you to prosecute your studies to a suitable extent. Thus God in his providence has left you entirely without excuse; and you are bound by the most sacred obligations to preach the gospel to every creature, so far as in you lies; and it should be the language of each of your hearts "Lord, here am I, send me."

III. Another important point for you to ascertain is, what are your reasons for desiring to enter the ministry.

These should be—

1. Not self-aggrandizement.

A person should not preach the gospel for the sake of promoting his own glory and honor. He should not "seek his own, but the things which are Jesus Christ's;" and then, if he be found faithful, he will be "counted worthy of double honor."

2. Not pecuniary emolument.

It is true, "the workman is worthy of his hire," and "they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." But no man ought to enter the ministry for the sake of worldly gain. It is an

apostolic injunction upon ministers—"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

3. Not ease or pleasure.

The ministry is a profession not of ease nor of sensual gratification; but of constant and unwearied labor. For the spiritual benefit of his people, the faithful minister of Jesus prays and toils, expecting no rest on earth, though anticipating it in the rewards of Heaven.

But your reasons for entering the ministry should be—

1. The glory of God.

It is true, you may glorify God in a variety of ways, other than that of the ministry. You may do it as a lawyer, a physician, or an instructor. You may do it in commercial, agricultural, or mechanical pursuits. But if you are proper persons to preach the gospel, you can glorify God far more in the ministry of his Son. In laboring for the salvation of lost men, you exhibit most gloriously the Divine Being—display his moral attributes to the greatest degree, and to the highest advantage.

2. The temporal and eternal benefit of man.

The preaching of the gospel is the direct means

which God has appointed for the salvation of men. In this salvation is included deliverance from the power and dominion of sin and the wrath to come, and admission to heaven. Its benefits, in part, obtain in this life—partial freedom from moral and natural evil, and the enjoyment of a consequent and proportionate good, corporeal and spiritual. But its principal benefits are spiritual and eternal—everlasting perfection in holiness and happiness. To be instrumental in the procurement of such blessings for the rebellious and lost, is an important reason to induce young men to enter the ministry.

3. The accomplishment of greater good.

In every case where it is duty for a person to preach the gospel, he will, by preaching it, do more for the glory of God and the promotion of human happiness and salvation, than he otherwise could.

And now let me ask what are your motives for desiring to enter the ministry of Christ? Are they self-aggrandizement, pecuniary emolument, ease or pleasure? If so, the springs of your action are altogether wrong and unworthy of those, who are to bear the vessels of the Lord. Or are your motives the glory of Jehovah, the salvation of men, and the accomplishment of the greatest good?

Then are they pure, and such as will meet the approbation of your blessed Saviour, when you stand before him in final judgment.

IV. In what part of his vineyard does Christ call you to labor?

The field is the world—the whole inhabited globe; comprising both Jews and Gentiles. “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.” To cultivate this field, there is a necessity for settled pastors, and for missionaries at home and missionaries abroad. But what part of this field is it the will of Heaven, that you should cultivate? Is it your destination to be a pastor, or a missionary?—to labor for Christ in Christian or in pagan lands? In deciding these questions, follow the leadings of divine Providence. In this particular, be like a little child—go where your heavenly Father leads you, and do what your heavenly Father bids you. Should he, by the indications of his providence, lead you to China, go, and preach the gospel to the 300,000,000 of that pagan empire. Should he direct your attention to Syria, the land of sacred interest, let that be the place of your prayers and labors in the service of Christ. It may appear, that the Lord intends you should visit Greece; if so, go and unfurl the banner of

the cross on that classic ground. He may have designed, that you shall preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the aborigines of North and South America, who, according to the opinion of President Stiles, Dr. Boudinot, and some others, are descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. It may be your duty, as indicated by the will of Heaven, to dispense the gospel in some waste-places of our Zion, or to proclaim it to the old and established churches of this land. And in this day of religious excitement and enterprising missionary spirit, it is perhaps a greater test of religious character, for you to be willing to become pastors of churches in the older States, than to migrate as missionaries to the western or frontier settlements of this country; or even to spend your days in pagan lands as heralds of the cross. Your duty will depend on your personal qualifications, the relative wants of different heathen lands, and of our own country, and the prospect of your success in one station rather than in another. There are so many contingencies in these respects, it is a work of time and careful observation to determine what field of labor duty calls you to occupy. Avoid being unduly anxious in relation to this subject; but pursue regularly your studies, be watchful of circumstances, notice the developments of your mind and spiritual feelings,

and wait for the openings of God's providence. You will at the same time read and reflect on the subject, and never forget to seek Divine guidance. Be much in prayer, and the Lord will grant you all needful direction.

By considering the above remarks, and by seeking light from Heaven, you will, I trust, be enabled satisfactorily to answer the question which each of you, no doubt, has often asked himself, *Is it my duty to preach the gospel?* Having answered it, you will be careful neither to "run before you are sent," nor wilfully to neglect, so far as your ability will permit, a compliance with the command of the risen Saviour—"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;" and to do it personally, feeling as did the apostle—"Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."

LETTER III.

PROMOTION OF PERSONAL HOLINESS.

DEAR BRETHREN,

In a previous letter, I addressed you on the nature and importance of holiness or entire consecration to God. In this, I would call your attention to the increase of grace or the promotion of holiness in your own souls. It is duty not only to be holy, but to be eminently holy; not only to exercise gracious affections, but to exercise them in the highest possible degree—to grow in grace daily, and to press forward “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,”—to “be perfect even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

But what is it to grow in grace? It is to increase in knowledge of sacred truth, and in conformity of heart to this knowledge. Reli-

gious affections to be good, must be put forth suitably in view of truth and duty. That gracious exercises, therefore, may be increased, there must be an increase of knowledge—knowledge of God, of man, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, and of the things pertaining to salvation;—and also a greater conformity of heart to this knowledge—stronger exercises in correspondence with the truths presented to the mind.

The means to be used in the promotion of holiness are various, but suited to enlighten the understanding and sanctify the affections. Some of these will now be mentioned.

1. The reading of the Sacred Scriptures.

The Bible is the great repository of religious instruction. It contains the will of God to man. Here is light and no darkness at all. The study of the Scriptures is, therefore, well adapted to illuminate the understanding and thus, by the influences of the Holy Ghost, to sanctify the heart. The prayer of Christ to his Father for his disciples was, “Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.”

2. The reading of religious books.

The perusal of memoirs of eminent Christians, especially ministers, and writings on religious experience, is very profitable. No person can read

as he ought, books on devotional subjects, as the psalms and hymns composed for sacred melody, without benefiting his heart.

*"Praise is devotion fit for mighty minds,
The differing world's agreeing sacrifice."*

3. Prayer with occasional fasting.

Prayer is styled the breath of the Christian. Without it he cannot live; but with it, he will live and live to good purpose. As soon as Paul was converted, it was said of him, "Behold he prayeth." And prayer is not only the life of a Christian, but it is efficacious in procuring blessings for those who pray and for those on whose behalf intercessions are made.—Fasting should be occasionally joined with prayer. This will produce feelings of dependence and humility, and prepare its subjects for the reception of blessings.

4. Self-examination.

This is an important and difficult work—important because of its utility, and difficult on account of its nature. "Know thyself," was a maxim held in high estimation by the ancients. Thales, its author, used to say "For a man to know himself is the hardest thing in the world." The natural and corrupt heart of man shrinks from a knowledge of itself. Self-examination is irksome to the

wicked. And as the heart of the renewed is sanctified but in part, so this remark will apply in some degree even to Christians. But important benefit will result from a faithful and frequent discharge of the duty of self-examination. No remedy can be applied, until the disease is known. Know then the plague of your own hearts, and to the wounds which sin has made, apply the balm of Gilead, and soundness shall be restored. See that your hearts are right in the sight of God. Keep yourselves in his love. Study to be richly adorned with all the Christian graces. Be men of prayer—maintain a constant intercourse with Heaven. No man can be a minister of the gospel, approved of the Great Head of the church, or deservedly eminent in the sacred office, without vital godliness. Let your piety, therefore, be consistent piety, secret piety, public piety, daily piety, piety in every thing, and then it will be seen in all its glory and permanence, as though it were written on the tablets of your lives with a sunbeam and the point of a diamond.

For the promotion of pure religion in your souls, permit me to exhort each one of you to institute the following inquiries in application to himself.

1. How old am I?

[The patriarch Jacob could say, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been."]

2. How many years did I live in sin against my Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor?

[“Christ died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”]

3. When did I first entertain a hope of an interest in the Saviour?

[Recal to mind, if possible, the precise time of your conversion, together with the circumstances, and the peculiarities if any, attendant upon it.]

4. What are the evidences that I have experienced a change of heart?

[The principal evidences of conversion are a heartfelt sense, that the doctrines of the Bible are true and excellent;—enjoyment in religious company and conversation;—delight in perusing the Sacred Scriptures and other religious books, and in meditating on divine subjects;—happiness in public, private, and secret worship;—joy at the prosperity of Zion, and a desire that the cause of Christ should flourish and triumph;—humility and meekness in deportment;—benevolence to all men, and complacency in Christians;—hatred to sin and love to holiness;—disposition to perform the will

of God;—and scrupulous obedience to his commands in daily conduct.]

5. What have I done *for* Jesus Christ, since I embraced a hope of having become his disciple?

[It is duty “to spend and be spent” for him who has done so much for man—laid down his precious life to redeem him, and who now intercedes in heaven for his followers.]

6. What have I done *against* Jesus Christ since I espoused his cause?

[Every sin, whether of thought, feeling, word or action, is directly or indirectly against Jesus Christ. My ingratitude, how base; my private sins, how numerous; my overt acts of transgression, how many and how aggravated!]

7. Is it to me grievous, that I have done *so little for* him, and *so much against* him who has done *so much for* me?

[“My leanness, my leanness!” “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.” “And he went out and wept bitterly.”]

8. Am I now any holier, than when I first entertained a hope of salvation?

[It is enjoined upon Christians, “Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”]

9. According to my present progress in sanctifi-

cation, will it not be very long before I shall be perfectly prepared for heaven?

[It is duty to press forward in perfection, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."
"Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."]

10. Why have I not made greater attainments in sanctification?

["Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." "Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ."]

11. Am I willing to progress thus slowly in sanctification?

["Woe to them that are at ease in Zion."]

12. Do I commence and close every day with reading and meditating upon the Scriptures, and with secret prayer, and am I inclined to prayer at other proper seasons?

[David resolves, "Evening and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud." He says also, "O, how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day."]

13. Am I formal and hypocritical, or sincere and spiritual in my devotions?

[It is a direction of the Saviour, "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are."—

“When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do.”—“God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.”]

14. Am I influenced in all I think, desire, purpose, say and do, by a regard to the glory of God?

[“Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”]

15. Am I entirely consecrated to Christ and the church? Is it the language of my heart and life, I am thine, O Lord! wholly thine, and thine forever?

[“And all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their hearts, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them; and the Lord gave them rest round about.”]

Dear brethren, “Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” Be honest with yourselves, and with your God; so shall you obtain eternal life, and, peradventure, turn many to righteousness, who shall be your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

LETTER IV.

DUTIES IMPOSED BY GOD.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Religious duties devolving upon you, while in a course of education for the ministry, will be the subject of this letter. It is not my design to specify every duty, but some of the most prominent. The inquiry is often made by students, Which, among the many and pressing duties at the institution, shall I discharge, and which omit? This is an important question, and it is reasonable, that it should be answered. I will now suggest some thoughts, which may serve to guide you in this respect. Here let me remark, that it is obviously not a duty to attempt more than can be performed. Obligation cannot surpass natural ability. This should ever be considered a sound maxim in theology. Of the duties which devolve

upon students in your situation, the following may be mentioned.

The duties of religion, imposed upon you by God himself, are ever to be regarded as prior to all others.

These relate to your spiritual interests, as well as to the honor of God, and are embraced in a number of particulars.

1. Reading and meditating on the Scriptures.

The Saviour has enjoined it as a duty, to "search the Scriptures;" and the Bereans are commended, in that they "searched the Scriptures daily."—The Bible should be read through in course every year, though it is to be feared, that even some Christians have never read it entirely through once, while yet they have entertained its hopes for years. Portions of it on doctrines, duties, devotion or experience, should be perused morning and evening, and with particular care and reflection, that they may be fully understood, and personally applied. The Bible should thus be searched as for hid treasures. At these seasons, the psalms of David, which excel all other writings in exciting devout emotions, the prophecies of Isaiah, with the gospels and epistles, should be particularly consulted. Previously to

reading the Scriptures, it will be proper to offer a short prayer, that God would "open your eyes, that you may behold wondrous things out of his law," and that "you may receive, with meekness, the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

2. Secret prayer. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet." The duty here commanded by Christ, is most clearly individual prayer, as appears from the form of expression. David says, "morning and evening, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud." Secret prayer should be observed, at least, three times a day; and, perhaps, no better seasons can be selected for the discharge of this duty, than morning, noon, and evening. Reason seems to point out these as suitable hours of the day. In the morning, before entering upon the business of life, and in the evening, having passed through its cares and trials, it is desirable to spend a season in religious retirement. As a safeguard to piety and good deportment, it may be well to withdraw for a time from the world in the midst of daily employments, and hold communion with God. The time allowed to secret devotions, should be not less than an hour every day. With this allotment, I would assign twenty-five minutes to morning and evening, each, in secret devotions

—in reading the Scriptures with self-application, in reflection, and in prayer; and ten minutes to noon, in reflection and prayer. Such, in general terms, I esteem to be your closet duties.

3. Morning and evening prayers in the rooms you occupy, when your associates are pious, or are willing to join with you externally in the service. “Our Father who art in heaven—give us this day our daily bread.” Such is a part of the Lord’s prescribed form of prayer. It is plural, and must, therefore, be social prayer—prayer offered by two or more. It is, too, daily prayer, and the most proper season for it is morning and evening. Here then we have an argument in favor of social morning and evening devotions. The services should be short, and consist of reading, in course, a passage of the Scriptures, singing two or three stanzas of some song of Zion, and uniting in prayer. Man is constituted a social being, and the choicest blessings may be derived from such social intercourse with Heaven.

4. Seasons of fasting and prayer. Fasting and prayer are enjoined in the Scriptures, and this duty was frequently observed by the ancient people of God. They fasted and prayed in seasons of mourning and afflictions, or when they suffered or feared the judgments of the Most High in conse-

quence of sin. The whole service was adapted to produce penitence, humility and sanctification. Such are its natural and happy effects upon communities and individuals. Such effects, Edwards, Brainerd, Payson, and multitudes of others, now in glory, derived from it. It is desirable, as a general rule, that a season of fasting and prayer should be observed by you as often as once in three months. On these solemn occasions, it is highly important, that you should, also, form resolutions in respect to duty, and institute questions of self-examination. Conducted in this manner, such religious observances will be of essential service.

5. Public worship on the Sabbath. In allusion to the discharge of this duty by himself and other Christians, the apostle says, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is." The duty of public worship is here acknowledged, and a compliance with it is expressed. Never, I beseech you, be regardless of assembling together with the people of God for public worship on the Sabbath. It should be viewed as a privilege, as well as a duty, thus to meet for praise, prayer, and religious instruction. Let your attendance be constant and punctual. The person is to be pitied who has to settle the question every Sabbath day, whether he will go to

church. With each of you let this point be fixed, and the only question in regard to it, ever to be agitated, be, Shall I this day absent myself from the house of God? When the hour for divine service has arrived, let your place in the sanctuary be filled. It is distressing to him who ministers at the altar, to see Christians tardy in their attendance on the services of religion. Permit me to add, though it may seem superfluous, the exhortation of Solomon, "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil."

The reasons for the discharge of the religious duties I have mentioned, are two :

1. They are imposed by God. This fact makes the obligation most certain and binding. When God commands, obedience should be rendered. Neither your pleasure, nor the pleasure of others can interfere with the authority and claims of Heaven.

2. Your own personal benefit requires a compliance with these duties. All the requirements of God are subservient to the best interests of the human race, temporal and spiritual. Self-interest, therefore, urges to a discharge of duty.

Such, dear brethren, are some of the religious duties imposed upon you by God himself, and such the reasons for their observance. The limits of the present communication prohibit a further discussion at this time, of the topics under consideration. In some following letters, it is proposed to address you in relation to the duties of a religious and classical nature, imposed upon you by the officers of the institution at which you are ;—the duties assumed by your own voluntary engagements in societies ;—and other duties which arise from times and circumstances.

LETTER V.

DUTIES IMPOSED BY INSTRUCTORS.

DEAR BRETHREN,

In my last letter, I addressed you in relation to some religious duties, which are imposed upon you by your Maker. In this communication, I would call your attention to another and mixed class of duties, required of you by your Instructors.

I. Some of these are of a religious nature.

1. One is attendance upon morning and evening prayers in the chapel. This duty you should discharge in a regular and punctual manner. Never omit a single service, and never be tardy in the observance of it, when you can possibly prevent it. Some students, and religious students too, not only absent themselves needlessly, but when they attend,

are inclined to be dilatory. Such negligence of duty indicates either a wrong state of feeling, or improper discipline in regard to habits, and should never be indulged by students, especially those who are preparing to be spiritual guides. These services, you will remember, should not take the place of your morning and evening devotions at your rooms. The latter should be observed without failure, whether you room alone, or in company with a Christian brother, or with one who is willing externally to join with you in such exercises. These public religious duties are not intended to interfere with those of a retired nature. They are designed as college services, and for the benefit of the officers and all the students collectively, the irreligious as well as the religious.

2. Other occasional or special religious meetings should also be observed. These have reference to times, seasons and providences, and should be particularly regarded. As to the propriety and expediency of them, the Faculty of the Institution are suitable judges, and in them is invested the power of appointing them. Such are the religious duties imposed upon you by your Instructors, besides those of an acknowledged and specific nature which God himself hath enjoined,

and which by them, are recognized as binding upon you.

The reasons for your compliance with these requirements are,

1. They are made by your Instructors, who have a right to make them. A neglect of them is as much a violation of a command, as the neglect of any duty whatever. It is not only contempt of authority, but disobedience to a wholesome regulation.

2. A second reason for the observance of these duties is, your own spiritual and eternal benefit. Though the employment of a student need not necessarily expose him to vice and immorality; yet it has a tendency to cool his affections in religion, as it engrosses his attention while at college, by those studies which, generally speaking, are rather foreign from religion, or are not particularly adapted to excite pious feelings; and while at the theological seminary, by those studies which are, to a considerable degree, theoretical, didactic, abstruse and metaphysical.

3. Another reason still for the proper discharge of these duties is, that the neglect of them would manifest a disrelish for religion, indicate a bad state of mind, and produce a most unfavorable public impression. It would savor of irreligion,

and give the enemy occasion to reproach the cause of the Redeemer.

II. There are duties of a classical nature that appertain to the pursuit of your education, which devolve upon you. By these I mean attention to classical studies, as ancient and modern languages, the mathematics and philosophy, belles-lettres and rhetoric, theology and biblical literature; also composition, declamation, etc. These duties should be performed with suitable diligence.

1. They are reasonable. The course of studies at the Institutions of this country, is similar to that of the Institutions of Europe, and has been adopted after mature reflection, by the literary, the wise and the good. To resist this, is to oppose your judgment against the opinion of men distinguished for learning, wisdom and piety. It is irrational and contrary to sound discretion.

2. Good scholarship requires proper attention to all the classical studies. A person may have a thorough knowledge of some one branch, and be very deficient in others. For instance, he may excel in the mathematics, and be not at all versed in the languages; he may be a good proficient in natural and moral philosophy, and have but little acquaintance with profane or sacred history; he

may be a sound theologian, and yet be unskilled in exegetical learning. But a student of such partial education will never obtain the character of a good scholar in the general acceptance of the term.

3. Usefulness requires that you should be thoroughly acquainted with the several branches of science and literature, taught at our public Institutions. When the community have so much general information as in the present day, it is absolutely necessary, that the education of clergymen should be proportionably extended. Unless it is so, instead of being suitably estimated, they will be undervalued. They may be theologians, but if they are not classical scholars, they will not be duly appreciated by the world, and by literary men. So on the other hand, though they may be well acquainted with the studies pursued at our colleges, yet if not well read in divinity, they will not be properly respected as ministers of the gospel ; and unless this is the case, their usefulness will be greatly abridged.

4. Another reason, still, why you should strictly attend to all the classical studies is, that the Faculty demand this. You are bound to comply with all the requisitions they make, unless contrary to the laws of God, or your own personal interest. You, especially, bring yourselves under this obliga-

tion, when you sign the rules of matriculation ; if you sign none, the obligation is implied. Whenever, therefore, you enter an institution, you bind yourselves sacredly to observe all its laws and regulations. And so long as you remain there, duty requires that you should do it. You may take a dismission if you please, and thus relieve yourselves from obligation to obedience ; but you can do it in no other way. While you remain a student, obligation to obedience rests upon you, and; consequently, you are bound to pursue a regular thorough course of classical and theological education ;—" that is, either preparing to enter college, or a member of some regularly constituted college, where a thorough classical course is pursued ; or engaged in theological studies with the design of taking a regular three years' course."

Such are the duties imposed upon you by the officers of the Institution at which you are, and such are the reasons for the observance of them. As one deeply interested in the character you shall sustain, in the happiness you shall enjoy, and in the usefulness of which you shall be instrumental, you will permit me to exhort you to give all diligence in the performance of these duties. Let no religious requirement pass unobeyed ;

let no classical requisition be neglected. The character you establish, while in a course of education, will most probably abide with you during life. The reputation for religion, sobriety and scholarship, which you obtain, will be handed down with your name to those, that shall come after. Let these considerations stimulate you to make every laudable effort to increase in knowledge, human and divine. Knowledge is power, and sanctified learning enables its possessor to exert a greater influence in promoting the glory of God and the salvation of men. This is an additional inducement to seek it as "the pearl of great price."

LETTER VI.

DUTIES VOLUNTARILY ASSUMED.

DEAR BRETHREN,

In a former letter, I wrote in relation to the religious duties or services imposed on you by your Creator. These were specified to be as follows: reading and meditating on the Scriptures; secret prayer; morning and evening prayers in your rooms when you have pious associates; seasons of fasting and prayer; public worship on the Sabbath; and other implied duties, such as attending on religious conferences. The reasons for the discharge of these duties, I stated were, the command of God, your own personal benefit, and your more extensive usefulness.

In another communication, I wrote respecting the duties imposed on you by your Instructors. Some of these are religious, as attendance on

morning and evening prayers in the chapel, and other occasional or special religious meetings. The reasons for observing these duties, are, the requisition of your instructors, your spiritual and eternal benefit, and the unfavorable public impression made by a neglect of them. The other duties mentioned, were of a classical nature, and appertain to the pursuit of your education. They are classical studies, as the study of ancient and modern languages, the mathematics and philosophy, history, belles-lettres and rhetoric, theology and biblical literature, composition, declamation, etc. The motives for observing these duties, are, their reasonableness; good scholarship and usefulness on your part; the command of the Faculty; and the expectation of the community.

I would now add a few remarks in reference to those duties which you impose upon your own selves, or which you voluntarily assume, or which arise incidentally from times and circumstances.

By the first of these duties, I refer to the obligations under which you are laid by connecting yourselves with different religious and literary societies. In all our public institutions, so far as my knowledge extends, societies of this nature exist. Their design is the spiritual

or literary benefit of the students connected with them; and to a greater or less degree, this design is subserved by them. It is, therefore, right and best that you should associate yourselves with others in this manner and for such purposes. This, surely, you should do to a reasonable extent. I say reasonable extent; for the question has occurred to my mind, whether the number of such associations is not too great at some of our public institutions. They seem to occupy an undue proportion of the time, and their effect in some measure is to dissipate the mind, and thus unfit it, at least in a degree, for the severer studies. The duties to which reference is here made, are of a voluntary nature, and originate in your covenant engagements, and should be performed, so far as time, opportunity and prior duties will permit.

1. Your social benefit requires this.

Man was made for society, and much of his happiness is derived from social intercourse. It is desirable that students should cultivate their social powers so far as compatible with their pecuniary, literary, and religious interests. It is not only lawful, but expedient and laudable to do it.

2. Your literary benefit urges you to the discharge of these duties.

This is one way in which you are to improve your minds, either by storing them with knowledge, expanding their faculties, strengthening or preparing them for greater and better service.

3. Your spiritual benefit is another motive for a compliance with such engagements.

In social religious meetings, the religious affections of the soul are excited and strengthened, the Christian graces are cultivated, and the best moral feelings are promoted. Such meetings are the means of grace, and by them the heart is made better. This is the principal design of them, and with this object in view, they should be observed.

4. Covenant engagements bind to the performance of these duties.

All societies have some constitution, written or unwritten, expressed or implied. And they have not only general principles, but particular rules by which they are governed; and all who become connected with them, agree to conform to such regulations and abide by them. So when you join a society in any public institution, you enter into solemn engagements to adhere to its constitution and rules, and you are thus bound to comply with them.

You will not be exonerated from these duties,

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if you can, without neglect of other and more important ones, discharge them. And you are bound to discharge them to the best of your ability, that is, in the best manner your talents and time will permit. Never be delinquent, except through imperious necessity; but always be punctual and faithful in the performance of every service assigned to you. In thus acquitting yourselves, you will have a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and obtain for yourselves a good report of more value than worldly treasures.

There are other duties of an incidental kind, which arise from times and circumstances. I mean such as the following: attending extra religious meetings, conversation with saints and sinners, extra compositions, epistolary correspondence, general reading, etc. The time to be devoted to these must depend altogether on circumstances.

Thus, in the ways and to the extent I have mentioned, you should employ your time and talents for the glory of your Maker, your own benefit, and the well-being of others.

May God give you hearts to perform his whole will, and thus may you find acceptance with him to the glory of his great name.

LETTER VII.

COURSE AND MANNER OF READING.

DEAR BRETHREN,

I have often been solicited to express an opinion in regard to the books it is desirable young men should own, while in their course of study for the ministry, and also what selection of books it would be well for them to read. This subject is one of importance, as it respects your pecuniary, literary, and religious interests, and, therefore, demands attention.

The books which every student should possess while in his course of preparation for the ministry, are the following.

1. The Bible. This is emphatically the book of books, and no student should permit himself to be destitute of it a single day. It is important to possess a self-interpreting Bible, or one with

references, that you may read it more understandingly and to greater profit, as Canne's Bible, Scott's Reference Bible, Wilbur's Bible, Polyglott Bible, with marginal readings, etc. In reading the Bible, you will always find it useful to compare the different parts of it, one with another. By doing this, you will obtain a more correct knowledge of the word of truth, and your impressions in respect to those portions of the Bible which you read from time to time will be more deep and permanent. If your knowledge of the languages will permit, you will do well to study the Scriptures in the tongues in which they were originally written.

2. You should possess a Hymn Book, and not only own one, but often peruse it. This will promote your devotional feelings and personal holiness. It will also render you familiar with the Psalms and Hymns usually sung in public worship, and thus be an assistance to you when you enter the ministry. The best Hymn Books with which I am acquainted, are Worcester's Watts with the Selection, and the Church Psalmody. There are other collections of Hymns, which are valuable, as Dwight's, and the Hymn Book generally used in the Presbyterian Church.

3. It will also be of great service to you to

have in your possession for constant daily use, a Manual of Theology and Devotions, or a book containing the truths of the gospel classified or methodically arranged, proved, illustrated, and enforced, as well as a series of resolutions and of questions for self-examination, and prayers adapted to the various circumstances and occasions of life. You need such a work far more than you may imagine; especially those of you who are pursuing your academical and collegiate studies. You need it as a guide for thoughts, feelings and expressions. As you have not time to read large systems of divinity, a compendium of theology must be valuable to you, as it will contain *multum in parvo*. Considering the youth and inexperience of many of you, it is not to be expected that all will be able to vindicate the doctrines of Christianity against the attacks of opposers, as circumstances may sometimes require, without some previous preparation. Such a work as I have mentioned will furnish you with arguments to oppose error and defend the truth. Resolutions in regard to the duties of life, questions of self-examination, and subjects for religious meditation and reflection, are deserving your most devout attention. These will be a great auxiliary to your growth in grace. To possess the gift of prayer is very desirable.

To assist you in thought and language, forms of prayer, especially if they are interwoven with a good selection of passages from the word of God, will be of advantage. Such a work will be beneficial to you while in your preparatory studies, and in subsequent life. You will be led to think more accurately on the doctrines and duties of the gospel, and to feel more correctly and devotionally, and to pray with greater propriety than you otherwise would.

4. You will not fail to possess the classical books you need—that is, all those books which you study as text-books, and are specified by the Faculty of the institution in their course of study. Books of this nature should be owned by every student, that he may not be dependent on others, and be often interrupted in his studies. Where books are owned in partnership, as is sometimes the case with students, there must be an unhappy interference while obtaining the lesson. Each will usually desire the text-book at the same time, and the one not permitted to use it at the best time, will labor under great embarrassment and disadvantage. Feelings of alienation will gradually be produced, though the individuals may be unconscious of it; and the one not enjoying the best privileges will frame to himself from this circum-

stance a reason sufficient in his own mind for not learning his lesson. Besides, the real expense for classical books will not be great; for ordinarily they may be purchased cheaply at second hand, and be sold as soon as you have used them, with but little discount.

5. While it is desirable, and, I may say, indispensable, that you possess the books mentioned, it is not absolutely necessary that you should be the *owner* of others while in the course of your preparatory studies. The books which it may be important you should consult as books of reference, or read as books of history, travels, biography, etc., may ordinarily be obtained from libraries, to which you may easily have access. As a general rule read only books that are moral and chaste—books of genius and spirit, and but few periodicals. The following are works, from which a selection for reading may be made, viz.

I. HISTORY.

Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth, translated by Prof. Stowe, (best work of the kind); Josephus's Wars of the Jews; Brown's Antiquities of the Jews; Rollin's Ancient History (some parts may be omitted—rather prolix); Mitford's History of Greece; Ferguson's History of the Roman Re-

public; Millot's Elements of History; Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, (style rich, but too elaborate to be a good model, and in its tendency, the work is infidel); Hallam's History of the Middle Ages; Robertson's Charles V. (style preferable to that of Gibbon); Milner's Church History, with the continuation of John Scott, (it is particularly a history of the Church, not embracing many other things); Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Murdock's edition, (it comprises much, which is to be viewed as not connected with the Church); Turner's History of England; Goldsmith's History of England, (a simple and good style); Hallam's Constitutional History of England, (containing valuable political principles); Russell's Modern Europe, (so far as the continent is concerned); Scott's Napoleon, (compared with other accounts of him); Grahame's History of the United States, (last edition); Marshall's Life of Washington, (very valuable); Writings of Washington by Sparks; Robertson's History of South America; Ellis's Polynesian Researches; Botta's History; Mills's History of British India; Frazer's History of Persia; Gutzlaff's History of China, (the most valuable work on China to be found); Russell's History of Palestine; Pitkin's Civil and Political

History of the United States, (a very valuable work); Holmes's American Annals; Histories of the several States of the United States.

II. TRAVELS.

Travels of Silliman; Neibuhr; Burckhardt; Park; Lander; Gobat, in Iceland and Russia; Clarke; Parry and Franklin, in the Polar Regions; Humboldt; Dwight; Travels of Missionaries, contained in the Missionary Herald.

III. BELLES-LETTRES.

Madame de Stael's Germany; Schlegel's Lectures on the History of Literature; Irving's Sketch-Book and Life of Columbus, (valuable for style and facts); Robert Hall's Works, (valuable for style); John Foster's Works; Spectator; some of the volumes of the Harpers' Family Library; Mrs. More's Works; Burke's Works; Elegant Extracts, New York edition.

IV. BIOGRAPHY.

Boswell's Johnson; Allen's Biographical Dictionary, containing much important matter that is historical in relation to this country; Life of Buchanan; Sir William Jones; Henry Martyn; Prior's Life of Burke; Brainard; Samuel J. Mills; Felix Neff; Payson; Legh Richmond; Thomas Scott; Andrew Fuller; William Pitt; John Jay; Elias Cornelius; Porter; Luther; Calvin; Knox; Hunter's Sacred Biography.

V. POETRY.

Milton; Cowper; Montgomery; Young; Bryant; Pollok's *Course of Time*; Thomson's *Season's*; Goldsmith's *Deserted Village and Traveller*; Akenside's *Pleasures of Imagination*.

VI. DEVOTION.

Bible; Hymn Book; Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*; Buck on *Experience*; Buck's *Young Christian's Guide*; Thomas a Kempis; Henry on *Meekness*; Christ is Precious, by Thornton; Baxter's *Saints' Rest*; Flavel on *Keeping the Heart*; Pilgrim's Progress; Pike's *Cases of Conscience*; Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man*; Edwards on the *Affections*; Flavel's *Touchstone*; Sir Matthew Hale's *Contemplations*; Owen on *Spiritual Mindedness*.

Having thus specified the Books you should possess, and also such as are suitable for you to read, it may not be improper to subjoin a few remarks in reference to your method of perusing Books, and especially those whose contents and merits are not known.

1. Read the title-page; that the subject and author may be known.

2. Run over the introduction or preface; that the object in view, and the manner of accomplishing it may be understood.

3. Take a view of the contents ; that the subjects discussed may be fully apprehended. "The index is the face of the book."

4. Cast your eyes upon the discussion of a few important points ; that you may learn the manner in which they are treated.

5. If the title-page be proper, and the writer an able and judicious person ; if the preface be apposite ; if the contents be such as they should be ; if the discussion of a few important points appear to be good ; then, if the book is on an important subject, read it through if you have time for it. But if all these, or the most of them, be otherwise than I have stated, lay the book aside. The probability is, it is not worth your perusal.

6. When you read, make a mark on the margin, or bottom of the page, with a pencil, against the most important thoughts or topics, that you may review them. Reflect on these when you first read them, and also when you read them the second time. Lord Bacon says, "There are books which must be merely tasted, others which must be swallowed whole, and a few which should be manducated, eaten and digested."

7. Possess a common-place book, and as you read, note down the leading thoughts. Sometimes quote. Sometimes quote the thoughts, and express

them in your own language. Catch the spirit of what you read, while you forget the language in which the thoughts were conveyed. Preserve these memoranda for perusal in some future time, that you may more thoroughly digest them.

8. In all your reading and study, frequently lift up your souls to God that he would aid you in apprehending what is fact, truth and duty, that you may be wiser, better, happier, and more useful. "*Bene orasse est bene studuisse,*" was Luther's motto.

Thus, dear brethren, I have expressed my views in relation to the books you ought to possess, and the books from which it will be well for you to make a selection for reading. You will understand that the list of authors I have given is to be considered general and imperfect. Many more books of a similar character might be mentioned; but those specified are sufficient for the purpose intended. The suggestions in relation to the manner of reading, I trust you will find profitable. The above thoughts are submitted with the hope that they may be subservient to your good. And may the great Lord of the harvest, whose prerogative it is to raise up laborers for his harvest, make you pastors after his own heart, and prepare you for extended usefulness in his church.

LETTER VIII.

THOROUGH EDUCATION.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The time was when strong prejudices against an educated ministry existed in the minds of many who now are decidedly in favor of it. This change is an indication of good to the cause of the Redeemer. With truth it may be said, that an education as preparatory to the work of preaching the gospel, is in the present day, almost universally acknowledged to be important. Indeed, "pastors who shall feed the people with knowledge and with understanding" are, by most Christian denominations, peremptorily demanded. Permit me then to direct your attention,

I. To what is implied in a thorough education for the ministry.

Such an education implies a thorough course of academical, collegiate and theological instruction, or the attainment of a full and accurate knowledge of those classical and theological studies which are pursued at our academies, colleges, and theological seminaries. This is what is understood by a liberal education for the ministry. To be accounted a man of thorough education, in the common acceptation of the term, it is not expected that such an one be distinguished in every branch of study, as the languages, the mathematics, philosophy, etc. There are but few if any of this description. Various are the natural talents of men. All are not geniuses, and all cannot be equally good linguists, mathematicians or philosophers. The scholarship of individuals will vary according to the peculiar native talents which they possess. Some are favored with a rich imagination, others with acute reasoning powers; some with a ready perception, others with a retentive memory; some with accurate judgment, others with a mathematical cast of intellect. The education of individuals will therefore in some measure be varied by the natural bias of their minds. But every person of respectable understanding may, by industrious application, become a good scholar or may obtain a thorough education; that is, a full

and accurate knowledge of those branches taught at our colleges and theological seminaries.

II. Why is a thorough education for the ministry necessary?

1. The opinion of the community requires it.

Nearly all the denominations of Christians now advocate a regular and thorough course of education for the ministry. Ignorance is viewed no more, as a qualification for the sacred functions, than it is as the parent of devotion. In the estimation of the public, clergymen must be educated men. No other ministers will be tolerated. The general voice is, "The priest's lips should keep knowledge." What was termed by our forefathers a learned ministry, the community in the present day absolutely require.

2. The work to be performed by ministers demands that they be men of thorough education.

Is it desirable, that an ambassador to a foreign court possess extensive knowledge? How much more important is it that an ambassador from the court of Heaven should be well furnished with mental attainments!

"He that negotiates between God and man,
As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy,"

should be a man of a cultivated mind. And though he may not become an intellectual giant, as was Owen, Howe, and some of their cotemporaries of the 17th century; yet he may be well versed in literary and theological science—be “mighty in the Scriptures.” The magnitude of the work requires that Ministers possess not only knowledge, but discipline of mind—proper regimen of its powers, and an ability to bring out of their treasury things new and old. Then will they “magnify their office,” and “make full proof of their ministry,” and be “workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

3. The present times require it.

The exigencies of Christian and of heathen lands call for a thorough education in the ministry. Those who preach the gospel must be respected for their talents and learning, as well as for their piety. The state of society requires it. General information is now extended through the community. A spirit of inquiry is abroad. More knowledge in the ministry is needed on this account. In these times of excitement, which try men’s souls, ministers of great physical strength, which consists of native capacity of body and mind, of great mental power which consists of knowledge, and of great moral power which consists of holiness, are demanded.

4. The great Head of the Church requires, that his ambassadors be well prepared to discharge the duties devolving upon them in their high vocation.

He sent not forth his apostles until they had received his instructions at least three years, and also his promise, that they should enjoy the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Timothy was exhorted to "give attendance to reading, to doctrine, to meditation on these things, and to give himself wholly to them." It is no easy thing so to preach as to enlighten the ignorant, instruct the learned, silence the cavilling, quicken the dead in trespasses and sins, and edify the people of God unto salvation. To plead well for the name, honor and kingdom of the adored Saviour, a man must be a scribe well instructed into the kingdom, and have an unction from the Holy One of Israël. For, if his

———"learning, like the lunar beam, affords
Light but not heat; and leaves him undevout,
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines,"

his instructions will not be a word in season to him that is weary. Learning, though vastly important, should not be considered a substitute for piety. It may indeed be its handmaid, but not its mistress. The ministers, well-pleasing in the

sight of Jehovah, are such as he will furnish for the church in the latter days of Christianity, when he "will give pastors according to his heart, which shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding." These will be ministers eminently qualified for their profession, of extensive learning, critical research—profound investigation.

III. How shall a thorough education for the ministry be obtained?

By pursuing a regular and full course of literary and theological study. This can be done to the best advantage at our public institutions of learning. It is not maintained that a man cannot acquire a liberal education in the arts and sciences without immuring himself within the walls of a college. He may do it,—may even become a proficient in them by private or self-instruction, though he would make more rapid and extended proficiency, should he enjoy the advantages of a public education. A full and thorough knowledge of the studies required in each stage, as at the academy, college, and theological seminary, ought to be obtained. No person should enter college till he is well prepared, that is, accurately and fully understands the studies required for admission. So when a young man has become matriculated in

some college, he should endeavor to pursue the prescribed course of study, viz. attend to all the branches taught at the institution, that he may possess some general scholarship. I would here enlarge, as students not unfrequently misjudge in this respect. The object of a collegiate course of instruction is not to give a partial education or a knowledge of a few branches only; nor to give a general education or a superficial knowledge of many branches; nor to finish the studies required for either of the learned professions;—but to commence and carry forward a thorough course of instruction in many branches, so far as the student's time and abilities will permit, and this too in such a manner as to produce a proper symmetry and balance of intellectual and moral character. In obtaining, therefore, a collegiate education, suitable attention should be paid to the different branches of science and literature. To prevent distortion of intellectual character, it is necessary that the young men in our colleges study the languages, the mathematics, philosophy, natural and political science, ethics, and the grand principles of our holy religion. Thus they will lay the ground-work of a thorough education—of high intellectual and moral attainments. This

foundation is not peculiar to either of the learned professions, but common to them all.

Having gone through a regular course of collegiate education, it is desirable, that a student pursue systematically and thoroughly the studies usually taught in our theological seminaries. There must be no abridgment in the amount of study; no ignorance baptized and sent into the sanctuary of God. Thorough training of minds in the literature of the Bible, in the science of religion, is needed to qualify for the high and sacred work of the ministry.

In conclusion I would remark, that most deplorable are the consequences of a defective education for the ministry. Its evils are palpable and appalling. By such an education the usefulness of a minister is greatly circumscribed; for he is altogether unqualified to teach the deep things of God, of Christ, of the Holy Ghost, of man, of heaven, and of hell. With superficial acquisitions for the ministry, what would have been achieved for Jesus Christ by Augustine, or Calvin, or Edwards,—names now immortal in two worlds? They never would, like the sun in the heavens, have imparted light and heat, and vivified all within the circle of their sacred influence as they

did. A partial education degrades the clerical profession. It not only diminishes its usefulness, but lowers its dignity. It also subtracts from the reputation of the minister on account of his want of ability to promote as he otherwise would, the honor of God and the salvation of men ; and on account of the low estimation in which he is held by those around him. The influence of ministers should be felt on the education, literature, and taste of the age in which they live ; but this will never be the case unless they are finished scholars and possess varied learning.

Such, dear brethren, are the views which I entertain of the importance of a thorough education for the gospel ministry ; and such, it appears to me desirable, you should possess. Be entreated to study this subject properly, that you may fully understand it, with all its important bearings ; and then you will be able rightly to appreciate a thorough training of your own minds for the clerical office, and to advocate the course adopted by all the public institutions of the land, with only one or two exceptions. May you all become such pastors as shall be able to feed the people with *knowledge* and *understanding*.

LETTER IX.

HABITS OF STUDY.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Habit is justly denominated "second nature ;" and when conformable to what is right, it greatly facilitates the discharge of duty. Man is sometimes called "a bundle of habits," because these seem to make up his nature and to constitute his character. How important, then, that these be correct ! No persons are more liable to form habits, and none are more powerfully affected by them, than students. This is fully illustrated in the change of character which takes place while in their course of education. A proper consideration of this subject, in application to study, can be neither uninteresting nor unprofitable to you. It is proposed, therefore, in this communication,

to discuss, in a brief manner, the habits of study which it is desirable you should form.

1. Your habits of study should be systematic.

“Order is Heaven’s first law ;” and it should be the first law of man. Every thing in relation to studies should be attended to in a regular manner, and then you will accomplish much and have leisure also. You will be most successful by adopting some judicious *méthod* in your pursuits. Permit me here to give you a brief outline of the manner in which your time may be advantageously occupied ; not specifying the *minutiae*, but merely suggesting some general thoughts on this subject. I would premise that it is impossible to fix the exact proportion of each day to be allowed to study, devotion, exercise, and the little necessary affairs of life. A wise scholar will aim at a due regard to them all ; while a slothful one will neglect some of them altogether, or pay to them a disproportionate attention. A plan for the employment of the day should be daily adopted, and the *routine* of engagements prescribed for yourselves should be fixedly pursued. If possible, every article of business should be attended to at the time assigned to it. Without such a plan and adherence to it, much time will be lost, many things will occur to interrupt, confusion and disorder will perpetually attend you.

I remark then, rise at the dawn of day. This is the dictate of nature. On the return of light, you should awake and rise to greet its approach. But the drowsy feeling which says "a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep," when indulged, is injurious to health, scholarship, and devotion. Says the industrious Dr. Doddridge, "I will here record the observation which I have found of great use to myself, and to which I may say that the production of this work" (his Family Expositor) "and most of my other writings are owing, viz : that the difference between rising at *five* and at *seven* of the clock in the morning for a space of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same hour at night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to a man's life, of which, supposing the two hours in question to be spent, *eight* hours every day should be employed in study and devotion." It was a remark of Dean Swift, that he "never knew any man come to greatness and eminence who lay in bed of a morning." Though this observation will not apply universally, yet it is true to a very great extent. Early rising results not only in the saving of time and the extension of scholarship, but also in the promotion of health and good spirits.

On rising, put yourselves in order for the day.

Let your attire, personal preparations, and little affairs be all attended to immediately. It is disgusting, and it is injurious to body, soul and reputation, for a student to neglect the requisite attention to his personal appearance till a late hour. It was said of Gen. Washington, that "his habitual practice was not to leave his chamber in the morning until he was fully dressed for the day."

Let your Maker have the full homage of your souls. Spend at least twenty-five minutes in secret devotion, that is, in reading and meditating on the Scriptures and in prayer. Thus commence the day with God, that you may receive his guidance and blessing throughout its passing hours. "The great Dr. Boerhaave acknowledged that an hour spent every morning in private prayer and meditation, gave him spirit and vigor for the business of the day, kept his temper active, patient, and calm." Such are the natural effects of sincere prayer.

Give attention to your classical studies, especially if you have a recitation early in the morning. Always be in readiness for this season of examination and improvement. Duty and interest urge to this. Besides, the morning is unquestionably the best time for study.

If the arrangements of the institution are such as to require attendance next on morning public prayer, you will not fail, *extras* excepted, to comply with this duty and enjoy this privilege. Be punctual and circumspect in the observance of this service.

Perhaps you will now be called to recitation. If so, cheerfully obey the summons, and be seasonably present, that you may avoid the imputation of being tardy. Never allow yourselves to be absent from recitation, unless unavoidable circumstances absolutely require it.

The time for taking your morning's meal will now have arrived. Go to this refreshment with feelings of gratitude to the Giver of your mercies, and receive his bounties in a cheerful and respectful manner. Avoid, with detestation, all uncouth and indecent practices at table.

If you have any time for exercise previous to breakfast, it may be usefully improved in that way. Your most laborious or vigorous exercise should be taken before meals, rather than afterwards. Gentle exercise for a few moments after breakfast, will be found useful.

Returning to your rooms, you will find it convenient and profitable to spend a short season in reading some portion of the sacred Scriptures and

in prayer. Where two students room together, this service should be social. Each should take his turn in leading in these devotional exercises.

The next thing to be attended to, is the lesson for the forenoon. This should occupy your mind till it is fully obtained. If the hour of recitation shall not have arrived when your lesson is gotten, you can amuse yourselves for a time in miscellaneous reading, or in some incidental matters, to which your attention is properly called, such as writing letters, etc.

When the recitation for the forenoon is over, if time permit, take exercise again. This will serve to enliven and invigorate the body and mind, and give you an appetite for dinner.

Having dined, a short time may be spent in relaxation—in walking, conversation, etc. Before commencing your studies for the afternoon, devote at least ten minutes to reflection and prayer in secret.

If you have a recitation in the afternoon, fail not to be well prepared for it. It is inexcusable in a student to appear in the presence of his instructor with his lesson imperfectly gotten. Some students imagine, that to be great scholars they must attend particularly to general reading, as works on history, imagination, taste, etc., even to

the partial neglect of their classical studies. This is erroneous reasoning. While it is desirable, when opportunity is afforded, to read for relaxation, amusement, information and improvement, it is never desirable nor expedient to omit a recitation on this account.

A season will elapse between recitation and public evening prayers and tea. This may be occupied in exercise or miscellaneous services and duties.

After supper, the first general business should be to study your lesson for the morning. When this is obtained, you will spend the remainder of the evening in your regular course of reading, or in attending to those things which must necessarily be performed.

Before retiring to rest, read a chapter in the Bible and engage in prayer. This practice should be maintained, whether you room alone or in company with another. This is not to be viewed as secret devotions; for such services respect the individual only who engages in them. Whether he reads or meditates or prays, he does it in relation to himself. The whole is individual, personal and secret; and these services should be maintained regularly every night just before retiring to rest.

The hour for repose should be such as to afford a sufficient opportunity for rest and sleep before the eastern horizon shall be streaked with the morning's light. No particular time can be specified for every individual. Some constitutions require more sleep than others. Perhaps the time to be allotted to sleep daily, as a general rule, is from six to eight hours ; and this should all be between the setting and the rising of the sun.

Such is a general plan of engagements of a student for a day. Other duties will devolve upon you from time to time. There will occasionally be lectures, extra-recitations, society meetings and conferences to attend, and various kinds of interruptions will occur. The plan which I have mentioned, should be carried out in its principles in the occupancy of every day. Every morning make a just distribution of your time, that each hour may be properly occupied, and write it down in your *memorandum*. Pursue this course, and in a short time it will become natural and easy. Custom is seldom irksome, and in following this, "*labor ipse voluptas*."

2. Your habits of study should be steady. Uniformity of plan and pursuits is very desirable. Fickleness in a student, is ominous of evil. Be constant, then, in your efforts to obtain knowledge,

and never wait for what is sometimes termed by students an *afflatus*. He who delays an attention to his studies in expectation of some happy impulses, will ordinarily wait in vain.

3. You should be habitually diligent in your studies. Without industrious application you will not become masters of those elementary treatises which you will be called to learn. But by constant and unwearied labor in the pursuits of science you will be successful. There is great truth in the saying of Periander, the Grecian : *Μελέτη τὸ πᾶν*.

4. Your habits of study should be zealously active. Indolence is incompatible with good scholarship. "Sloth is the rust of the soul." Though a student be regular, steady, and even diligent; yet if he be not zealously engaged, he will not make rapid progress. There is a sort of mental abstraction, in some individuals, which is detrimental to advancement in knowledge. Great activity in study is indispensable to great success. In this respect the injunction of the apostle is applicable, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Literary drones should be driven from all academic halls.

5. You should cultivate habits of perseverance in study.

In zeal, some students "run well," but it is only

for a season, and, consequently, they never ascend the heights of Parnassus. Persevering efforts in a right way, will accomplish wonders. By assiduous, untiring endeavors, Demosthenes triumphed at the forum, and Julius Cæsar in the field.

6. You should endeavor to acquire a habit of pursuing your studies with a determination to succeed in them.

By perseverance with determination of success, the *principia* of Sir Isaac Newton were formed and the pyramids of Egypt were erected. The temple of science is represented as being on the summit of a mountain, difficult of ascent. The injunction of the wise man, therefore, should be heeded by every student, in application to his literary pursuits: "Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her, for she is thy life."

7. The habit of obtaining an accurate and full knowledge of the studies to which you are called to attend, should be sought.

It is not wrong but right, to desire, from proper motives, the reputation of being a thorough scholar. Learn, then, every part of your lesson, so that you may be able to recite it promptly and fluently. In order to this, you will attend to one thing at a time and finish it. When it can be done, take a review

of the lesson, just before summoned to recitation. Acquire, if possible, the habit of accurate and profound investigation, and be not weary in studying demonstrations in conic sections, or the problems of Euclid. And in all your studies, aim at symmetrical proportions, not indulging a predilection for some studies to the neglect of others equally important.

Lastly. It is your duty to form the habit of accompanying all your efforts to obtain knowledge with prayer.

“In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths.” It is duty to do this in your studies as well as in every thing else; and if it be done, the blessing of the Almighty may be expected to follow. Constantly, then, implore the assistance of the Holy Spirit on your endeavors to acquire knowledge. He can, and no doubt does at times, expand and invigorate the intellectual faculties and enlarge their vision, strengthen the powers of memory, render accurate the judgment, and sanctify the knowledge acquired. “Think with yourself,” says Dr. Watts, “how easily and how insensibly, by one turn of thought, he can lead you into a large scene of useful ideas; he can teach you to lay hold on a clew which may guide your thoughts with safety and ease through

all the difficulties of an intricate subject. Think how easily the Author of your being can direct your motions by his providence, so that the glance of an eye, or a word striking the ear, or a sudden turn of the fancy, shall conduct you to a train of happy sentiments. By his secret and supreme method of government, he can draw you to read such a treatise, or to converse with such a person, who may give you more light into some deep subject in an hour, than you could obtain by a month of your own solitary labor. Think with yourself, with how much ease the God of spirits can cast into your mind some useful suggestion, and give a happy turn to your own thoughts, or the thoughts of those with whom you converse, whence you may derive unspeakable light and satisfaction in a matter that has puzzled and entangled you; he can show you a 'path which the vulture's eye has not seen,' and lead you by some unknown gate or portal out of a wilderness and labyrinth of difficulties where you have been long wandering." Dr. Doddridge said "that he never advanced well in human learning without prayer, and that he always made the most proficiency in his studies when he prayed with the greatest fervency." Says John Newton, "the chief means of obtaining wisdom and suitable gifts for the min-

istry are the Holy Scriptures and prayer. The one is the fountain of living water ; the other the bucket with which we are to draw."

Hearken, then, dear brethren, unto the voice which says, "Incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding ; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures ; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom ; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

LETTER X.

EXTERNAL DEPARTMENT.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The subject of my last letter, was habits of study. The present one will relate to your external deportment. This should ever be expressive of reverence towards God, and of regard towards yourselves and those with whom you associate.

I. Your external deportment should be reverent towards the Most High, in regard to his being, character, works, and government.

Whatever brings reproach upon the existence, perfections, works, law or gospel of God, is *irreverence* towards him; and whatever manifests approbation of these, is *reverence* towards him.

God, therefore, may be treated reverently or irreverently, by looks, words, and actions.

1. By *looks*. The countenance is an index of the heart. By this, we exhibit to those around us our thoughts and feelings, at least in some degree. Now as we are bound to reverence the Most High, so we are bound to exhibit this reverence in looks. Let your countenance then be such as profound veneration for God would produce under the circumstances in which you are. Let holiness to the Lord, be so legibly inscribed upon the visage which he has given you, that "he may run that reads it." Let the truth of God, the love of Jesus, and concern for the salvation of souls, be depicted in your very looks.

2. God may be treated reverently or irreverently by *words*. These are symbolical of thoughts and feelings. By language, is ascertained in a good degree the state of the heart—what is predominant there. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "With the tongue, bless we God even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing." As God gave you the organs of speech, so it becometh you to "speak of his righteousness and of his praise all

the day long.” “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt.” “Be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” Then will you reverence God with the powers of utterance which he has given you.

3. God may be treated reverently or irreverently by *actions*. These represent ideas of the mind and feelings of the heart. They speak as plainly and loudly as do words. Whatever the profession, conduct may give the lie to it. Actions may clearly contradict the most positive asseverations, and prove them to be insincere. Let yours then, fully demonstrate the most devout reverence for God.

II. You should ever manifest a regard for yourselves,—your existence, talents, and character.

1. Your existence. You are bound to do nothing, which will destroy life or abridge it; but to do every thing, within the bounds of reason and propriety, which will save and protract it. The sixth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” and the law of self-preservation, taught by the light of nature, enjoin this duty. As a means of preserving life, health and happiness, “Be temperate in all things.” Temperance is the using of that only which is good, in a moderate and healthful manner.

Food, raiment, and exercise, are good for the preservation and comfort of life, and therefore, may be used in a moderate and healthful manner. Ardent spirits, opium, tobacco, arsenic, are poisonous, and as such are sometimes good as medicine, and may be used in a proper manner consistently with temperance; but they should be totally abstained from otherwise than as medicine. The reasoning which is sometimes adopted for the use of these poisons, besides as a remedy in disease, viz. a person by using them, through their stimulating effects can accomplish more, whatever his employment, during life, even though it should hereby be abridged, therefore, he should use them, justifies suicide, and is wholly at war with the Bible. It maintains the sentiment, It is lawful to do evil that good may come—to sin that grace may abound;—a sentiment denounced by the apostle, and long since rejected by the church of the living God.

2. You should manifest a regard for your talents. By these I mean, whatever God has given you to occupy or use; as faculties of body and mind, time, possessions, and influence. The noble powers, corporeal and mental, which man possesses, he is bound to improve, and not to do this is to sin against himself as well as against God. Time and worldly possessions are talents

allotted to man, which he is to occupy as a steward of God. This is a fact, too, in regard to all the influence he possesses. Be entreated, then, to occupy with all fidelity the talents which Heaven has committed to you. This is your duty, privilege and interest.

3. You should exhibit a regard for your character as a scholar, a Christian, and a Christian preparing for the ministry. You are under great obligations to make all the literary acquisitions in your power. As it regards your moral and religious character, reputation is all-important. It is duty not only to be good, but to appear to be good. No person is under greater obligations to be circumspect in deportment than a minister, or one preparing for the ministry. See to it, then, that your character be not tarnished by any obliquity in matters of a moral and religious nature. "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

III. In your deportment you should have respect to mankind around you.

1. They should be regarded as the creatures of God. He gave them existence, and formed them with rational and immortal natures. They are upheld by his power, supplied from his fullness, and purchased with the blood of his Son. If

God so regards mankind, surely they ought to be respected by each other.

2. Mankind should be treated by you according to their condition and relation in life. They are all to be viewed as members of society. Some are to be considered as superiors, others as equals, and others as inferiors; some as benefactors, others as the recipients of bounties; some as Christians, others as impenitent sinners; some as heirs of heaven, and others as heirs of hell.

3. In all your conduct towards others, let sincerity, uprightness, kindness, affection and faithfulness be manifest. Let this be true of you not only in heart, but also in appearance—in looks, words and actions.

Such are the thoughts I would at this time present for your consideration. You will receive them, I trust, as from one who has a deep interest in your temporal and spiritual welfare. May you, by divine grace be enabled to lead such a life as God will approve, angels will approve, Christians will approve; and the wicked world around you will “not be able to gainsay or resist.”

LETTER XI.

PECUNIARY EXPENSES.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The topic selected on which to address you in the present letter, is one of no inconsiderable moment, as it respects your happiness and usefulness in life, and one which is not regarded by young people as it should be, if indeed it is so regarded by those of advanced age. This topic is *pecuniary expenses*. In reference to these, permit me to exhort you to practise strict economy. But a question here arises, Wherein is economy to be practised?

1. In dress. Attire should be comfortable and decent. No language will more appropriately characterize what it should be, than this. It should be comfortable, having regard to climate and the season of the year. No person, in the exercise of

judgment, would wear the same clothing in all respects, in the torrid, that he would in the frigid zone ; in summer that he would in winter. Reason dictates the suitableness of different apparel. Yet some are so regardless of propriety, or so improvident, that they seem to reverse this order of nature. Their clothing is altogether unsuitable and unbecoming, and discovers a great deficiency in judgment and taste.

Attire, too, should be decent, neither so costly, mean, nor singular, as to attract attention. It should be such as to bring reproach upon neither one's self, Christ, nor his cause. This may be done by meanness, or by extravagance. Habili-ments may be so ordinary as to cast contempt upon him who is clad with them, and they may be so expensive as to produce the same unhappy effect. The coarsest and the finest cloth is less durable than that of a medium quality. The latter, therefore, should be preferred. While some persons are so fond of costly dress as to have their minds engrossed with it ; others are totally indifferent to the quality of their apparel, or pride themselves in their indecent garments. Every individual should aim to render himself acceptable in the kind and manner of his attire. In all respects, it should be decent ; neither mean,

finical, nor extravagant; but plain and simple—devoid of all superfluous ornaments. The opposite of this indicates levity of mind and effeminacy in manners, which reason, religion and public opinion, condemn. Dr. Franklin's remark is highly worthy of regard :

“Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse ;
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse.”

2. Economy in expense for board. The mode of living ought to be temperate. Food should be plain and simple—served without the artificial stimulants of modern cookery. One dish at a meal is preferable to many. A person should never eat and drink to surfeit, but in moderation. He should always observe strict regimen in regard to the quantity and quality of food and the manner of partaking of it. High living is a precursor to indolence and disease; but a temperate diet is promotive of health and activity. “Sound sleep,” says the son of Sirach, in the Apocrypha, “cometh of moderate eating; he riseth early, and his wits are with him; but the pains of watching and choler are with an insatiable man.” The famous Cornaro used to remark, “That of all parts of a feast, that which one leaves does one the most good.” Says a proverb, “An expensive mouth makes a lean

purse." Perhaps the most economical, and most judicious way of boarding, for you, is in commons.

3. Economy in the purchase of books. Those classics which are needed in pursuing the regular studies should be possessed. If they cannot be procured from libraries, they should be purchased. To do without them is miserable economy. A few religious books, as the Bible, a hymn book, a vade-mecum on the doctrines, duties, and devotions of religion, should also be possessed. I doubt the expediency of buying a commentary on the Bible, previously to your entrance on a theological course of study, unless your pecuniary circumstances are affluent. It will be injudicious to purchase a library, while preparing for the ministry. Some students seem ambitious of having a large library, though they have not time to read it. In gratifying this desire, they involve themselves in debt, which, afterwards, they deeply lament. Never buy more books than you are able to pay for.

4. Economy in the use of fuel and lights. Many students, it is confidently believed, consume more fuel than is necessary, and more than is beneficial for their health and happiness. An excessive degree of heat debilitates and produces sluggishness, while a cool state of the system operates as a tonic and invigorates. I have known young

men in the coldest weather of winter, heat their rooms to such a degree, as to be obliged to study with their coats off. How injudicious this as it respects health and economy!—In the use of lights it is different. There should always be a sufficiency to prevent injury to the eyes while studying. For this purpose, oil is preferable to candles, on account of its effects on the visual powers. Its light is clearer and more steady than that of candles. Never sleep with a light burning in your room through the night, as is the practice of some students.

5. Economy in expense for furniture. It is not advisable to have much furniture for your rooms. You will then be freed from its incumbrance, and will not possess conveniences for the accommodation of idle scholars, who so often interrupt by their visits the more industrious and studious. Time, reputation, and money, will be saved. Public opinion highly disapproves of unnecessary expense of this nature, and to this you should ever pay a respectful regard.

6. Economy in travelling expenses. In this item a large or small amount can easily be expended. It is not to be supposed that while pursuing your studies you would journey for pleasure merely, as both time and money are in

this way consumed, neither of which should be unavailingly spent. But if necessity requires, that you should travel, be frugal in your expenditures. The advantages resulting to students from journeying are small, compared with those derived by persons of mature age, or by preachers of the gospel. To travel on foot when convenient, is often found to be salutary, and it is honorable when practised from right motives.

7. Economy in incidental expenses. There may be prodigality even in the use of paper, quills, etc. Some seem disposed to purchase every trifling thing that comes in their way. They cannot withstand temptations—but are unwarrantably free in the use of what is termed pocket money. They do this, not considering that while they thus squander property, they acquire bad habits and lose reputation. Both character and scholarship are thus endangered.

Such are some of the particulars in which economy should be practised. But why?

1. Economy should be practised, because in this way an unjustifiable expenditure of money will be prevented. “Owe no man any thing,” is an injunction of the apostle, demanding the most serious attention. Keep free from debt, if possible,

remembering, that students are very apt to be improvident in regard to money matters. Embarrassment incurred by prodigality should be considered a moral, as well as a natural evil. Allow not yourselves to purchase on credit if you can avoid it, for by so doing you will pay a large per centage. Never purchase an article which you do not need, because it is cheap. Remember the saying of Franklin, "Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessities." While frugality is a virtue, parsimony is a vice. A penurious, mercenary spirit should in no case be indulged.

2. Economy will prevent much infelicity. The mind of a person will be affected more or less by his pecuniary condition. This will depend in a great measure on his natural temperament. When embarrassed with debt and harassed by creditors, irritation, perplexity and dejection, will be produced. The declaration on the part of him who sells, "I am willing to wait till you can find it convenient to pay," has been of immense injury to multitudes of young men. They have learned that "experience" in such instances "keeps a dear school;" that "creditors have better memories than debtors;" and that "those have a short Lent, who owe money to be paid at Easter." A heavy debt will be like a millstone about your necks.

3. Economy will furnish the means of doing good. Money is power, and it will give ability to accomplish more for Zion, than can be accomplished without it. When a person thinks of making a purchase, he should inquire, Do I really need this? Can I do without it? A careful expenditure of money should ever characterize your conduct.

Let me now call your attention to the measures which should be adopted, by which the habit of economy may be induced.

1. One measure is the practice of keeping an account of expenses. Purchase a blank book and open a regular account with yourself—keep debt and credit; make an entry of all your receipts and expenditures,—be particular in details, and let no item escape your registry. It is a good saying, “Take care of the pence, the pounds will take care of themselves.” Set down the price of every article purchased, and the time when it was purchased, that all your expenses for the day, week, month, and year, may be open for inspection. When you make contracts, settle all particulars respecting them at the time. Never leave any thing to discretion, or to be fixed upon at some future day. By doing this you will

prevent much difficulty. Take receipts for the money you expend and put them in file, that you may readily turn to them if necessity requires.

2. Frequent examination of accounts. Often look over your pecuniary affairs that you may learn their state. Never consent to be trusted. By doing this you will avoid a temptation to purchase what is not really needed, and to give more for an article than its value. It is far easier to order a thing than to pay for it. If you purchase with ready money, you will not be tortured with bills of debt. And remember the words of Solomon, "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretiship is sure." Never therefore be surety for others.

3. Reflection on the thought that money confers ability to do good. Property gives influence in society, and, on account of this, it is to be highly valued. Wants, therefore, should be moderated, indulgences abridged, and a wise economy studied. While you should never be sordid nor avaricious in your pecuniary concerns, you should nevertheless adopt it as a rule to live within your means, and rigidly adhere to it.

4. Contemplation on the consequences of possessing or not possessing the habit of economy. These are immense. And they extend not only

to ourselves, but also to others ; not only to the present life, but also to the future.

Thus I have mentioned some particulars, in which economy should be practised, presented some reasons for its observance, and also pointed out some measures to be adopted for its promotion. This I have endeavored to do with plainness, candor, and kindness. My object has been to present these considerations before your minds, that you may profit by them in future life. The subject is of importance, and has a bearing not only on your happiness and usefulness, but also on the interest of Zion, and of society at large.

LETTER XII.

TEACHING SCHOOL.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The question, Ought I ever to instruct a school while pursuing a course of collegiate education? is frequently agitated by students in application to themselves. And to settle it right is a matter of no ordinary moment. It should be disposed of in such a manner as to affect favorably the individuals immediately concerned, the institutions at which they are, and the community at large. No one has a right to benefit himself at the expense of the public. No one may lawfully use his own liberty to the injury of others. On no subject have I been more often interrogated, than on that of collegians keeping school; and it is one of deep interest both to them and to the institutions of learning in our country.

Without pretending to do justice to the subject, what I propose in this letter, is simply to lay before you some of the reasons for and against teaching school, while you are pursuing a course of collegiate studies. Some of the reasons in favor of it are the following :

1. It will serve to perfect your own knowledge of the elementary branches of an education, or of the studies you teach, such as orthography, reading, chirography, arithmetic, grammar, geography, rhetoric, astronomy, etc. An individual cannot instruct in these branches without becoming more extended and accurate in his knowledge of them. While teaching theoretically, he will be taught himself, theoretically and practically.

“Thought, too, delivered, is the more possessed ;
Teaching, we learn,—and giving, we receive.”

This is one of the results which naturally follow instructing. The mere act of a young man in preparing his school for examination at its close, and also in preparing himself to conduct the examination, will benefit him—will serve to give him an accuracy, readiness and confidence in the studies pursued, which is very desirable to be possessed.

2. Teaching school will lead to an acquaintance with human nature—with men and manners. In

children we see mankind in miniature. We see the operations of different minds under different circumstances—different constitutions, education, and prejudices. These developments, if attentively observed, will be of great service, by giving you a knowledge of children, who are always an important part of a minister's charge.

3. Teaching school will prepare one to communicate ideas to others. By teaching his pupils, an instructor acquires a habit of imparting knowledge. He learns to present, with propriety and facility, his own thoughts to others. This aptitude in conveying information is very necessary in a minister of the gospel, who is to be a public teacher.

4. Teaching school will conduce to the attainment of self-possession. An instructor cannot address from day to day an auditory like a school, without imperceptibly acquiring, to a considerable extent, a command over his own mind and heart in their operations. By engaging in this employment, you will obtain that confidence in yourselves which it is very desirable you should possess, when you are called to perform the functions of the sacred office. It will be an advantage, not only as it respects conversation and addresses, but also in relation to prayer. In this last service, you will

be particularly benefited by the practice of leading in the devotions of the school, morning and evening.

5. Keeping school promotes sociability. Persons who have been engaged in teaching for any considerable time, usually become very conversable, however taciturn they naturally may have been. They not only engage readily with others who lead in conversation, but they suggest topics and originate subjects of discussion, and take a prominent part in discussing them. In this manner, your mind and habits will be affected by the practice of teaching school.

6. Teaching school relieves the tedium of study. After young men have been attending to the classics for a number of months, to instruct for a season affords a sort of interlude. This change of employment is a respite in some degree both to mind and body. There is a variety in the business of teaching, and the labors differ from those of studying.

7. School-keeping tends to promote a disposition of obedience to instructors. Having seen the importance of government in a school, and knowing how obedient students are regarded by himself, a judicious instructor is at once, and from a consciousness that it is right, naturally led to

exercise due subjection. He learns, in a most emphatic manner, the truth of the poet's remark,

"Order is Heaven's first law; and this confessed,
Some are and must be greater than the rest."

Such a teacher, then, will learn to be governed, as well as to govern, and will be led voluntarily to submit to wholesome regulations.

8. Teaching furnishes an opportunity for benefiting the rising generation. The knowledge of those members of college who instruct schools, being more extended than that of those teachers who have not pursued the usual collegiate studies, they will, from principle as well as from natural impulse, endeavor to elevate the standard of education among the young, and thus aid in promoting their welfare. By their moral and religious instructions, and their holy example, they may exert a happy and powerful influence over the minds of the youth committed to their charge. Children look up to their instructors, and receive from them impressions durable as time, yea, as eternity. How salutary, then, the influence of pious teachers; and what a loss the youthful portion of the community would sustain, were they to be deprived of this influence.

9. School-keeping is advantageous, also, by furnishing much pecuniary aid, and thus increasing

the number of those who obtain an education. The emolument received for such service is of important value to any young man, especially so if he is indigent. Money procured in this way, too, is worth more to him than that which is received by inheritance or by gratuity. By such assistance, multitudes are enabled to obtain an education, who otherwise could not. One half of those educated in this country are dependent on this source for the aid which they absolutely need, and without which they would despair of an education.

The following are some of the reasons against students' keeping school while obtaining a collegiate education :—

1. The absence which school-keeping requires, deranges the course of study in the colleges. This remark is true of the regulations of these institutions generally as they now exist. Where the practice of teaching prevails to any considerable extent, the faculty are compelled to change the order of studies. Those of the least importance are attended to during the time in which those students who instruct are absent from college.

2. Teaching school necessarily abridges the scholarship of those students who engage in it.

In consequence of their employing a portion of term time in instructing, they have less to devote to study; and by reason of their consequent deficiency of knowledge in the classics, they must pursue their studies with embarrassment. Besides, that part of the year which is occupied in teaching, is far the best for close application to study. The knowledge, therefore, of those who instruct, will be abridged.

3. Teaching school also is apt to affect unfavorably, while at college, the body, mind, and piety, of those students who engage in it. The absence which school-keeping requires, and the consequent suspension for a time of classical pursuits, cause their studies, while at college, to press upon them to such a degree that attention to their religious duties is liable to be neglected. They are, too, in a greater or less degree, under constant excitement of mind, accompanied with anxiety in reference to their scholarship. This, in connection with the severe application to study, required to maintain a respectable standing with their class, often proves detrimental to health. Besides, if a student who is in the habit of teaching a part of the year, attempt to study during this time, as he will be induced to do, there will be such exhaustion of vital power as to prevent his

accomplishing so much, when devoting his whole time to study, as he otherwise could.

Such are some of the arguments for and against teaching school while in college. In view of them, it may be asked, What course is it advisable to adopt? Where it is practicable, it is probably best for a student to continue his studies without cessation during term time, and to keep school before entering college and after graduating. It is no disadvantage to an individual to instruct a year after closing his collegiate course, and before commencing his theological studies. When necessity requires a young man to keep school while in college, it is very important that he should enter well prepared, and then use such exertion as prudence shall dictate to keep up with his class, though he may be absent a few weeks each year in term time. He should, if possible, pursue his studies regularly until his academical course is finished. It is disadvantageous, as a general thing, for a student while in college, to spend one year in teaching, and then take a class below the one which he entered. By thus degrading himself, he will not enjoy fully the fellowship and sympathy of the class he leaves or enters; and frequently wrong constructions will be placed on the motives of his conduct. There is usually an infelicity attending this course of procedure.

Though school-keeping is frequently injurious to body and mind, yet it need not be so if prudently pursued. One who instructs should not study to such a degree, as to keep up in all respects with his class. The benefits resulting from teaching, such as discipline of mind and knowledge of men, manners and things, may be considered as an equivalent for the greater literary attainments of his class-mates. There will be no detriment to health, if his conduct in this respect is judicious. Rest and quiet in some degree will be afforded to the mind, and much confinement of body will be prevented. The exercise of speaking in school will expand the lungs and impart to them tone and energy. Instructors should not devote all their time while out of school to study. They need seasons of relaxation to refresh and invigorate the mind and body. They should occasionally visit the parents of their pupils, and endeavor to gain their affections, and be useful to them. In this way, health of body and soul will be promoted, and an opportunity afforded for an introduction to those classes of the community, with which ministers are usually called to associate.

In some colleges, arrangements are made with special reference to the accommodation of those students who wish to engage in instructing. The

winter vacation is long and the others short, so that the whole amount of term time is nearly the same as at other institutions. During the absence of those who engage in teaching longer than the vacation, those who are at college attend to studies, a knowledge of which is not required of the whole class, and, consequently, is not indispensable to obtaining a degree. In such cases, the rank of the students in scholarship is estimated by their attainments in the classics required.

It would seem to be advantageous were the students at the western colleges to adopt more fully the practice so generally pursued by those in the eastern and older colleges, that of spending a portion of their time in teaching school. By doing this a large number of teachers for children and youth now needed would be furnished, great salutary influence would be diffused through the community, much pecuniary means would be furnished to assist the students in obtaining an education, extended knowledge of human nature, so important in ministers at the west, would be obtained, and the colleges not be obliged to make so heavy drafts on the Christian community for their support, as the students would then be able to pay for their tuition.

These hasty remarks, on a subject which has so

important a bearing on the interests of those young men who seek an education, on the colleges of the land and the community at large, you will, I trust, receive, dear brethren, with kindness and candor. They are made with the most sincere desire of benefiting all concerned. So far as you are called, in the providence of God, to participate in the

“Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot!”

may you be happily instrumental in promoting the benefit of the rising generation.

LETTER XIII.

TRAVELLING.

DEAR BRETHREN,

My present communication will be on the subject of travelling while in your course of preparation for the ministry. The reason for my addressing you on this subject is, that many students spend a part of their vacations in this way, and, it is apprehended, not to the best advantage. There are indeed no objections to a person's travelling, if circumstances require it, or his pecuniary ability will permit, provided it be not attended with injury to body or mind. In some instances, it may be of essential service, as it regards both of these; but it is often injurious. As a general thing, those clergymen who do not travel succeed better in the ministry and sustain a better char-

acter, than those who are in the habit of travelling. They are more industrious and economical, and more contented with their condition, and more disposed to be laborious and self-denying ministers. This appears to be the case so far as my knowledge extends.

But, on the supposition that travelling is ever advantageous to a clergyman, the time for it is not while in his course of preparatory study. The reasons for this decision are the following.

1. It is more expensive for a student than for a minister, to travel. This, at first thought, may seem to be incorrect; but it is not so. In order to appear respectable, the student will be obliged to clothe himself at nearly as much expense as the individual who has finished his education. Every person must appear decently according to the character, in which he presents himself before the community. A traveller for information, or for the purposes of refinement and taste, must be clad with decent apparel. So, in passing from place to place, the mode of conveyance will be nearly as costly, unless he travel on foot, and this will not comport with the character of one who is journeying for pleasure, or for acquiring a knowledge of the country, and of men and manners. His style of living too, (for he must have a subsistence by

the way,) must correspond with that of a gentleman. The same may be said in relation to his incidental expenses. And if indigent, the money he thus expends, must be hired, and when obtained, it will be accumulating by the interest that will accrue.

But the candidate for the ministry while travelling will find, that his expenses will be either less, or more easily defrayed, than those of an undergraduate, for two reasons : First, he will be invited to spend a considerable portion of his time in the families of clergymen and the more respectable part of the community. While thus situated, he will be at no expense. And secondly, he will be requested to preach occasionally for compensation. This will in some measure furnish the means of defraying his expenses. The increased expense of travelling, while in a course of study, should be an inducement to refrain from it.

2. A student cannot travel with that honor to himself, with which a candidate for the ministry will. He will be regarded as a youth whose education is unfinished, and not as a literary man or a clergyman ; and consequently he will not be held in the reputation, that he otherwise would be, nor will he be admitted to the higher circles of society. It is different with a candidate for the ministry. He is viewed as having finished his

education—as having entered upon that profession which clothes him with sanctity and obtains for him admission to the best circles of society. In the public estimation, his character is unimpeached and unimpeachable. His travelling, too, is altogether consistent with the dignity of the ministerial office. It is not so with a student, especially if his circumstances are indigent. By all people he is viewed as a person whose duty it is to be rather retired, and confined to his studies or some lawful and profitable employment.

3. Travelling is injurious to the student, as it dissipates his mind, and often deranges his corporeal system, and thus unfits him for his accustomed employment.

No person can journey, and mingle with the scenes of life consequent upon it, without becoming more or less dissipated in mind, and thus disqualified for close application to study. The traveller can attest to this truth. Frequent journeying is incompatible with great progress in study. And while travelling produces dissipation of mind, it often deranges the bodily powers, as this kind of exercise and mode of living are not always congenial with the physical condition of students. Laborious exercise in the open air, which shall affect all parts of the system, is best adapted to

health. This invigorates—gives tone and energy to the whole body, and thus, by sympathy, favorably affects the mind.

4. Travelling is an interruption to study.

So far as it occupies time which would otherwise be devoted to study, it interferes with such a pursuit, and retards the advancement which otherwise would be made. It does more than this ; it breaks the chain of classical studies, diverts the mind from it more than any other occupation, and thus prevents that continuous mental application, which is necessary to the increase of literary and theological knowledge.

5. A person while in a course of education, cannot derive from travelling so great mental improvement and personal accomplishments, as when he shall have finished his studies.

The more knowledge of science and literature, of men and things, a person possesses, the greater advantage will he derive from travelling. This is true in all cases. It is, then, far better for a person to travel when he shall have finished his classical education, than while obtaining it.

As you will at times necessarily have occasion to journey, I shall close this letter with a few suggestions in reference to the manner of travel-

ling. The kind of travelling here intended is different from that which has been considered. The former is for the extension of knowledge, for relaxation, or for the gratification of curiosity. The latter is from necessity, though so far as it may be improved for the promotion of health and information, it ought to be thus improved.

1. The mode of conveyance.

Sometimes it may be well to travel on foot, when the distance and time of absence is to be short, and health requires it. If the distance is great, and you journey for health, ride on horseback. The cheapest, easiest, and most expeditious method of travelling, is by public conveyance, as stage, railroad car, or steam-boat. It is also probably the safest mode of journeying, if we take into consideration the number who travel and the distance travelled. The modern improvements in these respects are a cause of gratitude.

When you journey in public conveyances, see that your name is duly and seasonably entered on the way-bill and your fare paid, provided it be taken at that time. If you are to travel a great distance, sometimes a ticket may be obtained for the whole route at a more reasonable rate than to pay at different stages. If you go on board a boat, early seek for a berth, that you may obtain

a better one than you would by delaying to do it. Have an eye upon your baggage, that it be neither left nor misplaced, and do not contend with porters about prices; it is better to suffer evil than to stand for rights with such men. It is better that laymen should do this kind of business, than for you who are soon to enter the ministerial office. When you travel in the stage-coach, be not too solicitous to occupy the best seats, especially if there are ladies, or gentlemen of distinction present, as politeness allows them the first claim to accommodation. Never contend for a seat, or interfere with the acknowledged rights of others. Treat with kindness the aged and the infirm, and be respectful to all.

2. Be particular in your selection of a tavern at which to stop.

Always seek one of good reputation; if in a city, not the cheapest nor the most extravagant in price. A temperance house should have the preference, *cæteris paribus*. When you are travelling from day to day, and must pass on in the first conveyance, stop at the house from which the stage is to start. Pay for your lodging and meals as soon as you are ready to depart, and not leave your bill unsettled till the last moment, lest you should forget it, or lest it seem to the landlord as though

you would leave without paying, and thus you injure your character.

3. Conduct towards innkeepers, stage-drivers, and toll-gatherers, with kindness and in perfect integrity.

If you do this, they will ordinarily treat you well; at least I have found this to be a fact in regard to myself, in travelling between forty and fifty thousand miles. You cannot compel them to be more obliging than they choose to be—especially a stage-driver or a toll-gatherer. They feel that they have authority, and to a certain extent they have; yet, if treated properly, they will generally be civil, and often very attentive. They should never be treated ill because the toll or fare is high, for it is not they but their employers who fix the rate of these.

4. Be circumspect in conversation and manners.

It is not uncommon for persons who travel to hear individuals relate various things appertaining to themselves and their connections and friends—their names, origin, place of residence, employments, politics, religion, the place to which they are going, and the object they have in view. Such a conversation, while it is sometimes interestingly curious, is, at others, disgusting, as being egotistical, and as revealing what should not be

disclosed. Familiarity with strangers is unbecoming. Speak but little of those who may be considered absent, for they or their friends may possibly be present, and thus evil may ensue. Some travellers are much disposed to deliver a sort of lecture on politics, morals, or religion, while in the company of others; but such conduct is seldom well received or profitable. Let it be with you a settled principle never to dispute while travelling, nor to engage fiercely in controversial subjects, nor to be forward in conversation. A suitable reserve is becoming. Never attack drunkards or the immoral in the presence of others; they will insult you. You cannot injure them; but they may injure you. Still, "a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" It is not always wise to distribute tracts indiscriminately, and wherever you go, though great good may arise from a judicious distribution of them. A person may do good in travelling by manifesting great sobriety, kindness, and courtesy—an affectionate, gentlemanly deportment, and discreet conversation on religious and other topics.

5. Be regardful of your external appearance.

Your person should be kept as cleanly as circumstances will permit, and your attire decent. Some travellers are altogether regardless of these

things, and hereby manifest disrespect for their companions, and bring discredit on themselves.

6. Endeavor to profit by travelling.

This should ever be one special object in view. You may profit by improving your manners and habits, and by acquiring knowledge of places and things. This you will do by proper inquiries, and accurate, attentive observation ; and in all your intercourse with people while travelling, never contract or indulge a complaining habit. The late Rev. Dr. Porter of Andover has happily characterized many travellers. He says of them, they "are querulous in all circumstances. The driver is blamed for the dust he makes. His pace is too slow or too rapid. The breakfast is too late or too early. The beef is too much or too little roasted. The road is too level or too hilly. The habits of a people are all wrong if they differ, however much for the better, from those to which the individuals have been accustomed ; and a city is an ugly place, if its appearance is in any sort, otherwise than they expected." Persons of this description travel with little benefit to themselves or others.

Such are my views in reference to the time and mode of travelling. They have been expressed

with the kindest feelings and a desire to promote your well-being, and it is confidently believed, that they will be received by you in the same spirit. The importance of the subject has been impressed on my mind by learning that a large portion of the incidental expenses of students arises from the journeys they take. A part of this is necessary. It is right and expedient that they should occasionally visit their parents, guardians, and friends. But, as a general thing, more than this is not advisable. It would not be so, were they ever so wealthy ; certainly, then, it is not so, if they are in indigent circumstances. May the Lord guide you in this matter according to his holy will.

LETTER XIV.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER, MENTAL AND MORAL.

DEAR BRETHREN,

In this letter I shall consider some of the most distinguishing traits of character, mental and moral, which it is desirable, that you should possess and cultivate. My object will be to delineate, not all the characteristics which are important, but the most prominent, that your attention may be suitably directed to their acquisition in the highest degree to which you can attain. As habit exerts a mighty ascendancy over us, and is, therefore, often denominated "second nature ;" so it is very desirable, that those mental and moral qualities which conduce to your happiness and usefulness, should early be possessed, that they may become settled and extended. Of these, I would name,

1. DECISION.

This is coming to a firm conclusion in reference

to any matter and remaining in it. Commendable decision implies two things, knowledge of what is truth and duty, and a fixed determination to conform to them in practice, without compromise. A person who has not a full view of that about which he is to form an opinion, or to act, will ever be undecided, because, as his knowledge changes, so will his opinions and conduct change. He will be tossed to and fro, and be "carried about by every wind of doctrine." He will have no settled opinion, but he will be in constant fluctuation. The same may be said of the individual who has no fixed determination. Such an one will be wavering and indecisive.—In the natural structure of their minds, some persons are decided and inflexible; others are the reverse. Decision, when considered in relation to any proposition to be maintained, any duty to be performed or practice to be observed, is of greater or less consequence, according to the nature and importance of the subject to which it relates. In regard to matters of religious faith and practice, it is of the highest moment that our decision be right, or the very fact that we are decided, may prove injurious either to ourselves or others. In forming your decisions, then, be not hasty, but deliberate and judicious, especially on subjects of a religious

nature. You will always exercise the most stable confidence in God, for "they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever."

2. RESOLUTION.

This trait of character means fixedness and fearlessness, in purpose and action—a zealous determination to perform some act or to accomplish some object. It is the opposite of that feeling and conduct described by Dr. Young, when he speaks of man, who, prone to procrastinate his reformation,

"Resolves and re-resolves, then dies the same."

A man strongly marked with this trait of character, will overcome difficulties seemingly insurmountable. Before him the Alps and Pyrennees become plains, oceans seas, and seas fordable pools. It may be adopted as a maxim, true in the general,—a person may be what he resolves to be, or do what he resolves to do, provided he attempts to accomplish his resolution with resolution. This quality of mind ever has been and still is, essential to success in any difficult undertaking. Without it, those objects of interest and magnitude in the arts and sciences, which delight and astonish the world, would not have existed.

The various volumes of instruction which contain the labors of the learned, the wise and the good, would not have been produced for the benefit of mankind. Without this, too, the various efforts which have been made, and which are still making, to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of the human family, will not be carried forward to complete success. Endeavor, then, to possess this valuable qualification, and suffer not feeble and irresolute exertions to prevent the performance of any duty.

3. COURAGE.

A proper definition of courage, is bravery, intrepidity. It is the opposite of pusillanimity or timidity. A man of this spirit never says, "There is a lion without—I shall be slain in the streets." Possessed of religious heroism, he is ready to strive with the world, the flesh and the devil. He who would conquer, must manfully contend; and he is the greatest hero who conquers himself. This trait of character, both in a natural and moral sense, should be diligently sought and cultivated. It is in no way so well obtained as by the promotion of piety in ourselves. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion." Courage, though not so frequently called into requisition as some other quali-

ties of the mind, is nevertheless of essential service. Occasions may occur when a destitution of this will be attended with serious disadvantages, especially so, when in relation to things of a religious nature, the want of it would prevent one from advancing in the path of duty. He who suffers a fearful or timid spirit to deter him in the work of the Lord, will be instrumental of greatly injuring his cause, and of giving an opportunity to the enemy of souls to triumph. Such an one is unworthy to be an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

4. INDEPENDENCE.

This means exemption from reliance on any one, or control by any one. When properly cherished and exercised it partakes of magnanimity in thought, feeling, and action. A pride of singularity in this, or an ostentatious display of it, is not commendable. Would you possess true independence of character, think and act for yourselves—never reject or adopt opinions or practices merely because others have rejected or adopted them. It has been said, “No man was ever great by imitation.” Therefore, take no opinion, pursue no course of conduct, on trust; be biased neither by passion nor prejudice in faith or practice, but believe and act on substantial evidence and sound principles, and in such a course be inflexible.

Ever be willing, however, to hear suggestions from those who are entitled to deference and esteem, and who do not coincide with you in views and feelings. But never sacrifice your own opinions and practices in accommodation to theirs, without full conviction that they are right.

5. PERSEVERANCE.

By this is meant continued steadfastness or persistence in purpose and pursuit. It is the opposite of fickleness or inconstancy in endeavor, and yet it is not bigotry nor obstinacy. A person possessed of this trait of character, is generally successful in what he attempts. True is the motto, *Perseverando vinces*. Without perseverance, the most desirable object to be obtained may fail, even after much exertion has been used to effect it. They who would win the prize must run, and never cease running till the race is over. In every pursuit, then, to which duty calls, notwithstanding the obstacles which may arise to hinder your progress, persevere even to its full accomplishment. You are now not aware what you will be able to perform. Try—remembering that whatever has been done, may be done again;—keep on trying, and success is almost certain.

6. JUDGMENT.

As judgment is that act of the mind by which

we form opinions in regard to right and wrong, truth and falsehood, persons and things,—whatever may aid in rendering its decisions correct should be diligently attended to. This is a quality of mind which, like others, may be improved by cultivation. A person whose judgment is inclined to err, though his motives be good, is constantly in danger of coming to wrong conclusions, by which evils may ensue. While one whose judgment is correct, readily and clearly perceives what is right, and is prepared without delay to follow its dictates. Cultivate, to the highest possible degree, your faculty of judging respecting persons, things, and actions. Though it is not the privilege of every one to possess this trait of character in equal perfection ; yet, by careful and diligent attention, it may be greatly improved.

7. COMMON-SENSE.

A good definition of this is given by Mr. Hall, author of the "Lectures on School-keeping." He says, "I mean by the term, the faculty by which things are seen as they are. It implies judgment and discrimination, and a proper sense of propriety in regard to the common affairs of life. It leads us to form judicious plans of action ; and to be governed by our circumstances, in such a way as men in general will approve. It is the exercise

of reason, uninfluenced by passion or prejudice." This trait of character is the opposite of one which appeared in a Methodist minister, according to an account I heard given of him at an Annual Conference of that denomination, when, in conformity with their standing rule, the ministers are appointed for the year. It was said of him, that he did not properly time things; that he frequently chose wrong texts for discussion, and then wrongly illustrated them; that he never hit the nail on the head; that he preached *at* rather than *to* the people, and prayed *at* rather than *for* the people. Because he was thus destitute of common-sense, the Conference, which seemed to possess much of this excellent quality, withheld the renewal of his appointment. In this characteristic of the human mind, there is a combination of the following attributes—perception, judgment, and executive power, accompanied with a benevolent disposition. This desirable trait of character was possessed in a high degree of perfection by the late Rev. Dr. Samuel Worcester, Jeremiah Evarts, Esq., and the Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Porter.

8. SELF-CONTROL.

Self-control is another characteristic, the possession or destitution of which affects not only the happiness and usefulness of the individual who is

the subject of it, but is often connected with the welfare and happiness of others. One who, without consideration, speaks or acts from the impulse of feeling, has often, in the hour of reflection, occasion to regret an unguarded word or action; while one who is accustomed to self-control, will easily check the first risings of an inconsiderate and insubordinate spirit. The proper government of one's self, in regard to passions and conduct, is, therefore, very desirable, though contrary to our natural inclinations and difficult to acquire. It should ever be aimed at as a Christian duty, and as highly beneficial in its results, as it respects its subjects and others. "He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

Having, dear brethren, presented the topics contained in this letter for your perusal, you will, I trust, give them that attention which their nature and importance require. To the perfection of character, these traits are essential; though it is not to be expected that, in this imperfect state, there will be a complete attainment of them. Nothing short of this, however, should satisfy one. An approximation to it is, by the Christian community, imperatively demanded of all in your

situation. Endeavor, then, to possess these characteristics, that you may be more richly furnished and adorned for the work of the holy ministry, which you have in contemplation. May a desire for the glory of God, the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom and the promotion of holiness and happiness, stimulate you to increasing exertions in obtaining these qualifications, which will prepare you for active engagedness and extensive usefulness in the cause of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

LETTER XV.

MORAL PRACTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Practice is carrying out into action principles which have been adopted. As a general fact, no man is better than he professes to be, and but few men so good as their avowed principles, if practiced, would lead them to be. Faith has great effect on conduct. It is the mainspring of action. Practices are characterized by the motives accompanying them. In a moral view, they are good or bad, as the motives attending them are good or bad. The act itself, and the form and manner of the act, may be right ; but taken in connection with the motive and feelings accompanying it, may be wrong—may be sinful. Not entering into a particular discussion of this point, I invite your attention to a few thoughts which may be pre-

sented in reference to some practices of a moral nature.

1. TEMPERANCE.

This practice is viewed by the apostle Peter as a cardinal virtue, and Paul remarks, "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." I shall here touch only upon two particulars, eating and drinking. In these, no rule can be given which will accurately apply in all things to every individual. Says Gregory, one of the Christian fathers, "It is not the quantity or quality of the meat or drink, but the love of it that is condemned,"—the inordinate attachment to it. Water is the natural and best beverage for man. This is the opinion of the most respectable physicians, and of the most considerate part of the community. But even of water, so much may be used as to be detrimental. An unnecessary quantity has a tendency to weaken the system generally, and to debilitate in a very particular manner the digestive organs. Almost all other liquids used as a beverage are injurious, in a greater or less degree, and therefore should not be taken into the stomach as a drink. As for the use of distilled spirits, it would seem, that there could be but one opinion, since the subject has been so largely discussed, and so much

light is thrown upon it in the present day. No new arguments indeed can be presented, nor need there be, to induce you to advocate the cause of temperance. Reason and revelation, the motives of three worlds, proclaim, as with the voice of seven thunders, in the monitory language, "Touch not; taste not; handle not;"—total abstinence forever. "Temperate drinking is the down-hill road to intemperance," and "Entire abstinence from ardent spirits is the only certain preventive of intemperance." These mottoes should be inscribed upon the door-posts of every house, that the destroying angel may pass by. Like the phylacteries of the Jews, they should be fastened upon the forehead of every man, upon his wrists, and upon the hem of his garments, that they may be as amulets or preservatives to himself and others. Those who minister at the altar of God, who are set as watchmen upon the walls of Zion, should cry aloud and spare not, lift up their voice like a trumpet in solemn admonition, and, by precept and example, do all in their power to promote the cause of temperance. In other days, (awful to relate!) some who once presented the oblations of Christian assemblies before the throne of the great Eternal, being seduced by the importunities

of complaisance, and incautiously and frequently quaffing the deadly poison, became confirmed in habits which lead down to the gates of death. But these times have passed away. A minister cannot now be silent on this subject with impunity. If he stands aloof, or withholds his influence in any way from this cause, blood will be found in the skirts of his garments; for alcoholic liquors, as a beverage, are poison to the body and poison to the soul. 'But we are persuaded better things of you, though we thus speak.' Your whole influence will be found on the side of total abstinence and entire temperance.

The injunction, "Do thyself no harm," may be applied to the unlawful indulgence of appetite in eating. "Temperance," says Sir William Temple, "consists in a regular simple diet, limited by every man's experience of his own easy digestion." General rules, in respect to regimen, may be advantageously prescribed, but there will be many exceptions, owing to constitution, health, employment, and other circumstances. Food should be simple, nutritious, plainly prepared, and received regularly in moderate quantities. Three meals in a day and one dish at a meal, are considered the most favorable to health. Abstemiousness greatly prevailed among the Grecians.

Though they ate at different times, yet they indulged themselves with but one full meal in a day. Hence, Plato reports as a matter of astonishment, upon his return to his native country, after visiting Sicily, "*Vidi monstrum in Natura hominem bis saturatum in die.*" Most of the ancient philosophers were patterns of temperance, and lived principally on vegetable food. The early Christians, too, were remarkable for their temperance in eating. Multitudes in various periods have been specially regardful of their diet, and have profited by it in health and longevity. The subject of dietetics has been much discussed in the present day, and no doubt much benefit has been derived from its discussion. But from my own experience and observation, whatever may be read or thought on the subject, I should say the best practical plan is, to partake of plain, common food sparingly three times a day only, and to attend regularly and soberly to business as duty requires; and health, prosperity and happiness will usually be enjoyed. Just is the remark of Dryden,—

"The first physicians by debauch were made,
Excess began, and sloth maintains the trade."

I have noticed that those who read and converse much on dietetics, are frequently most afflicted with dyspepsy and its train of evils. This is to be

accounted for principally from the fact, that, because they are afflicted with this malady, they read and converse respecting it; and also in part from the fact, that, because they thus read and converse, they are thus afflicted. I am constrained to believe, that an anxious solicitude on this subject has a very injurious effect on the health, and therefore this should not be indulged. As a general rule, spend an hour a day in taking your meals, masticate your food properly, and receive your refreshments with a cheerful and thankful heart, fully adopting the maxim, "*Edimus ut vivamus, non vivimus ut edamus.*" Never indulge yourselves in luxurious living, but hold in utter detestation the epicurean character.

2. CLEANLINESS.

This is a practice, which, from its very nature, it would seem must receive all due attention; yet it is one which is oftentimes greatly neglected. A strict regard to its rules is important, as a neglect of them not only unfavorably affects the comfort and health of the individuals neglecting them, but also injures their influence on society. One who is greatly deficient in those observances, which neatness requires, particularly in respect to his personal appearance, depreciates himself in the view of others, deprives himself of their respect,

and, consequently, lessens his usefulness. A destitution of cleanly habits would mar the beauty of a character, even though perfect in other respects. The external state of the body for neatness is indicative of the state of the soul. Between slovenliness, filthiness, and vice, there is a close connection. Cleanliness in person and dress is very favorable to morality in those individuals who are the subjects of it, and the community with whom they associate. Whitfield was distinguished for neatness, and he used to say, "cleanliness is next to godliness." It was remarked of Rowland Hill, that "he used to consider a slovenly person and a dirty house as an evidence, that religion had effected no salutary change in the character." In your person, dress, room, furniture, books, and all things, be a pattern of neatness. 'Whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report, think on these things.'

3. PUNCTUALITY.

A habit of punctuality is attended with many advantages—many evil consequences will be prevented and much more good will be accomplished. An observance of this is important in all appointments, especially so in meetings of a religious nature. How often have the feelings of ministers been wounded to notice, on entering the place of

worship, but a small portion of the congregation present; and how much irreverence and disturbance are occasioned by the entrance of individuals after service has commenced. Religious people in this respect are frequently irreligious. Punctuality in ministers favorably affects their people and the community at large. They are viewed as examples to the flock. They, therefore, of all men, ought to be punctual in their engagements—in their religious appointments, pecuniary concerns, civil transactions, and domestic matters. “Appointments,” observes Mr. Cecil, “become debts; I owe you punctuality, if I have made an appointment with you, and have no right to throw away your time if I do my own. Punctuality is important, because it subserves the peace and good temper of a family; the want of it, not only infringes on necessary duty, but sometimes excludes the duty. Punctuality is important, as it gains time; it is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much more as a bad one. The calmness of mind which it produces, is another advantage of punctuality; a disorderly man is always in a hurry; he has no time to speak with you, because he is going elsewhere; and when he gets there, he is too late for his business, or he must hurry away to another before he can

finish it. It was a wise maxim of the Duke of Newcastle,—‘I do one thing at a time.’ Punctuality gives weight to character. ‘Such a man has made an appointment; then I know he will keep it.’ And this generates punctuality in you; for, like other virtues, it propagates itself.”

A most striking example of punctuality, is to be found in General Washington. It is said of him, “When he assigned to meet Congress at noon, he never failed to be passing the door of the hall while the clock was striking twelve. Whether his guests were present or not, he always dined at four. Not unfrequently new members of Congress, who were invited to dine with him, delayed until dinner was half over; and he would then remark, ‘Gentlemen, we are punctual here; my cook never asks whether the company has arrived, but whether the hour has.’ When he visited Boston, in 1789, he appointed eight o’clock, A. M., as the hour when he should set out for Salem; and while the Old South clock was striking eight, he was mounting his horse. The company of cavalry which volunteered to escort him, were parading in Tremont street after his departure; and it was not until the General reached Charles river bridge, that they overtook him. On the arrival of the corps, the General, with perfect

good-nature, said, ‘Major ———, I thought you had been too long in my family, not to know when it was eight o’clock!’”

Such was the punctuality of the man whom the world delights to honor. Be ye imitators of this illustrious example. Ever cultivate and maintain the habit of punctuality; and then you will do every thing in its proper season, and have time enough in which to perform it.

4. INDUSTRY.

Industry is a habit which has a most happy effect on those who practice it, and also on society. Its tendency is to promote cheerfulness, health, happiness, and usefulness. The hours of those whose time is diligently employed in the path of duty, seldom hang heavily, but glide swiftly away in serenity and peace, and seem too short to accomplish all their desires. ‘Diligence in business’ is an injunction of the apostle, and he further says, “If any would not work, neither should he eat.” Idleness is not only sinful in itself, but it is attended with unhappy consequences. It is a waste of time, that precious treasure given us for the most benevolent purposes, and it will ordinarily be followed by dissipation, poverty, and woe. These are its legitimate train. But the diligent hand maketh rich. Assiduity in lawful employ-

ments is duty and interest, temporal and spiritual. Action is the life and happiness of man. "Idleness," says Dr. South, "offers up the soul as a *blank* to the devil, for him to write what he will upon it. Idleness is the *emptiness* and business the *fullness*, of the soul; and we all know, that we may infuse what we will into an empty vessel, but a full one has no room for a further infusion." Practice, then, a wise economy of time, and be industriously employed. This will be to you an elixir of life, and a guaranty to your usefulness and honor. And in this view of the subject, true is the remark of Sallust,—*Suæ quisque fortunæ faber*.

5. ALMSGIVING.

That this is a duty, is evident both from reason and revelation. The relations we sustain to our fellow-beings bind us to compassionate and relieve the circumstances of the distressed. Among the Jews, the almsbox for the poor was called the box of righteousness. Hence, that which is given to them is, in Scripture, said to be their due. Says Paul to the Hebrews, "To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." The objects of charity are those who are really in a destitute and suffering state,

whether their necessities are of a temporal or spiritual nature, of the body or of the soul.

On whom is the duty of charitable contributions binding? All persons, according to their several ability, are obligated to relieve the indigent and suffering. But a question arises, How much is it duty to give in charity? It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine with exactness what proportion of his property any one is strictly bound to devote to private and domestic uses, and what to public and charitable purposes. The golden rule of the Saviour applies in cases like this: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." This requisition extends to spiritual as well as temporal blessings. To bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ, is the duty of every one, so far as ability and opportunity is afforded.

Contributions should never be made in an ostentatious manner. The Egyptians adopted as the emblem of charity, a blind boy reaching out honey to a bee that had lost its wings. In charitable offerings, the applause of God is to be sought, rather than that of man. Almsdeeds, too, should be performed with cheerfulness, and from disinterested motives. It is a duty, and it

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should be considered a privilege, to aid, so far as pecuniary ability will permit, the benevolent objects of the day. The calls for charitable contributions are frequent ; and if the means of giving liberally are not possessed, an interest in these objects should be manifested by such offerings as can be made. They should, too, be aided by your prayers, which may be instrumental of more essential benefit to them, than pecuniary gifts. You should also encourage them by endeavoring to enlist others in their behalf. Manifest an interest in all the objects of benevolence, and never depreciate the importance of any one of those, which is designed and is adapted to promote the glory of God and the salvation of man. However small your contributions may be, give something to all Christian enterprises, and then you will feel more cordially and deeply interested in them. But if you contribute to a part of these enterprises only, you will become one-sided Christians in reference to charitable objects, and thus be like some pine trees, whose boughs grow all on one side of the trunk. It is as honorable and praiseworthy for some to give pence, who have not ability to give more, as for others to give pounds, who have ability thus to contribute. This

is strikingly illustrated in the poor widow and her two mites. Cultivate a spirit of expansive Christian benevolence, and may you know by happy experience, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

LETTER XVI.

INTERCOURSE WITH THE WORLD.

DEAR BRETHREVEN,

Every individual exerts an influence to a greater or less extent, either salutary or injurious. That such influence may be beneficial, much depends on the character of his intercourse with society. One important object of such intercourse should be to render himself useful to others, by endeavoring to promote their highest happiness and usefulness. In proportion as an individual does this, he obtains the respect, love, and confidence of those with whom he associates, and so is the degree of his influence over them. It is desirable, then, that those distinguishing traits, which tend to secure this beneficial effect, should be diligently sought and cultivated by you. To a consideration of some of these I invite your attention.

1. Your intercourse with society should be kind.

Under this head may be included the various offices of benevolence to promote the welfare and happiness of others which will be manifested in different ways and in the various relations of life, as opportunity occurs. Kindness will lead one to regard favorably the motives of others, to view with candor persons of different sentiments and opinions, to acknowledge merit though blended with inconsistency. It is a fruit of that charity which hopeth all things. It forbids selfishness and haughtiness in behavior, and a manifest consciousness of superiority to others. It is condescending, gentle, and conciliatory, and will strive to avoid altercation and controversy, choosing to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong. It is very desirable that you should possess this grace. Nothing renders any one more pleasing than mildness and sweetness in conversation and deportment. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly." A cross-grained, misanthropic spirit carried out into action, will always create enemies. Being sour itself, it will produce sourness in others. In your social intercourse, never be guilty of talebearing

or tattling—a practice destructive to the happiness of society, and despicable in all addicted to it. Be affectionate in your behavior, particularly towards your chum, if you have one, and also towards your fellow-students. Should you at any time become excited, be careful to speak in a low tone of voice, for persons in a passion are apt to become vociferous and boisterous. Mr. Jefferson's advice was, "When angry, count ten before you speak ; if very angry, an hundred ;" better would it be to repeat the Lord's prayer, or one of the ten commandments.

2. Be courteous.

This grace is the very essence of politeness. He who possesses it will be civil, and engaging in his manners, and always regardful of the feelings of others. He will avoid whatever is blunt and clownish in demeanor. As the forms of social intercourse are conventional, he will seek an acquaintance with them and adopt them in practice, so far as duty allows, avoiding every thing that is eccentric, pedantic, or rudely familiar. He who embraces the sentiments of Christ's sermon on the mount and strictly adheres to them in demeanor, will have attained to a high degree of courteousness. He will be a truly polite man, amiable in his spirit, attractive in his manners,

and agreeably affectionate in all his intercourse. To be a perfect gentleman is not, therefore, inconsistent with being a true Christian ; but to be a Christian in heart and life, is, in the most important senses, to be a true gentleman. Such an one will avoid haughtiness and authoritativeness in his manner ; will never appear to deliver his opinions *ex cathedra* ; will never sacrifice truth, duty, or integrity at the shrine of what is called *the graces*. His conversation will happily illustrate the remark of the wise man, " A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Courteousness is far more important to the usefulness of an individual, especially of a minister, than is generally imagined. One of polite and graceful manners can easily gain access to society, and excite an interest in his favor, which may be improved by him to the noblest of all purposes, that of benefiting the souls of those whose favor he thus obtains, while, if destitute of this desirable trait, his influence would be comparatively small, especially on a portion of the community. Give heed then to the injunction of the apostle, " Be courteous." Treat all classes of men with due consideration, regarding them as children of the same family, entitled to humane and civil treatment, to all the offices of kindness and attention. Exhibit

that courtesy which is the truest politeness, and which, as Dr. Thomas Brown, of Edinburgh, says, "in all its most important respects, is nothing more than the knowledge of the human mind directing general benevolence. It is the art of producing the greatest happiness, which, in the mere external courtesies of life, can be produced ; by raising such ideas or feelings in the minds of those with whom we are conversant, as will afford the most pleasure ; and averting, as much as possible, every idea which may lead to pain."

3. Your intercourse with the community should be social.

At proper times and in a prudent manner be ever ready to engage in friendly conversation. Avoid that reservedness which would seem to separate you at an unapproachable distance from others and to say to them, stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou ; and avoid equally the extreme of familiarity which discovers a want of self-respect and deprives one of the respect of others. Great familiarity is frequently followed with contempt. Loquaciousness is seldom profitable. Says Solomon, "A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards." "A fool's voice is known by multitude of words." "He that hath knowledge spareth his

words." "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise." In your conversation be neither "full of talk" nor talk about trifles, nor be given to retailing unprofitable anecdotes. Though some good men are addicted to these things, yet you should never indulge yourselves in them. In your intercourse with others, regard their rights. Never unnecessarily interrupt, nor in a decided or dictatorial manner, contradict, those with whom you converse. Refrain from a melancholy appearance and a sadness of spirit, and be cheerful. Gurnall says, "God delights to have his mercy seen in the cheerful countenance of his servants while they are at his work." There should be buoyancy without levity; gravity without moroseness, affability without garrulity.

4. In all your social intercourse be ingenuous.

There is something that is pleasing in a generous, open demeanor. Frankness commends itself to every one; but meanness, slyness in the treatment of others is ever despised. The latter like the deadly Upas, spreads its poison wherever its influence is felt. One who is undisguised and frank in his communications easily gains the confidence of those with whom he associates, and, consequently, he has more influence

and greater advantages for usefulness. Disingenuousness is inconsistent with the character of a Christian, especially with the character of a Christian teacher.

Let your treatment of others be frank, and entirely free from all *finesse*, and let this be preceded by that generosity of soul which characterizes an honest man, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Never affect ignorance nor knowledge in your intercourse with the world. To do this is deceptive and sinful. Have, therefore, constant regard to truth and duty, and reveal not what is communicated to you in a confidential manner. A lawless and betraying tongue is an instrument of mischief.

5. Be circumspect in your intercourse with the community.

Says the apostle to the Ephesians, "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." He is wise who has attained unto the habits of wisdom. In all your intercourse be guarded. Little things go to make up the character of persons, and have great influence on the character and conduct of those with whom they associate. Avoid all frivolity and foolish jesting. Maintain a sedate and manly deportment. "Young men," says the apostle, "exhort to be sober." In con-

versation, dwell mostly on truth and duty, customs, manners, things, and the news of the day, rather than on particular persons or on their opinions and practices. To do this will save much bitter remorse on your part and the wounding of many feelings on the part of others. "A prudent man foreseeeth the evil and hideth himself."

When you happen to be in the company of females, let your discourse be such as to render you respected and esteemed, and your society valued. Think not that ladies prefer conversation of a light and trifling nature to that which is rational and improving. Such an idea is erroneous, and a reflection on their good sense. Be observant of all those attentions which true politeness requires; and endeavor to profit by your interviews with them. Their presence has a tendency to restrain from improprieties of conduct, to soften the manners and to promote good moral sentiments and feelings. Their delicacy and refinement are adapted to check the boisterous passions and to tame the brutal. I was once strikingly convinced of the truth of this, when travelling in the stage-coach in one of the southern States. There were present when I entered it in the evening, but two passengers besides myself. These were young

men, students of the University of Virginia. In the course of their conversation, during the night; (for we travelled all the night,) their remarks were vulgar, profane, and obscene, so much so that I felt constrained, when daylight returned and we could see each other face to face, to reprove them for their indecent and wicked language. They attempted to justify themselves. In the course of my remarks, I spoke of the omniscience of God, and the offensiveness of such conduct in his sight, but this seemed not at all to affect them. I then inquired, Should you have dared to utter such language had there been ladies present? O, no, replied one of them, we should doubtless have been restrained by the fair sex. No gentleman would utter any thing offensive to them in their presence. Happy then, said I, would it be were you always to fancy yourselves in the presence of ladies. To this they both nodded assent, and the conversation turned on some other topic.—This consideration is further confirmed by the fact, that in a stage-coach, where ladies are present, generally more order and propriety of conduct prevail than where there are none.

6. Strive to make your intercourse with the community profitable to yourselves and others.

Let it be your aim to do good and to get good.

There are many ways in which favors may be conferred on others. Such opportunities should be readily improved, not only for the important benefits thence resulting, but from a desire to fulfil the law of love, given by our Creator as the rule of action. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it." Seize every occasion which presents to perform offices of benevolence and humanity. In your conversation, and conduct, often ask yourselves the question, *Cui bono?* "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Job exclaimed, "How forcible are right words!" "A word spoken in due season," says Solomon, "how good is it." In your intercourse with the pious, (and it will I trust be the language of the heart of every one of you, "I am a companion of them that fear the Lord and that keep his precepts,") seek their edification and comfort. Converse on such subjects as will be for mutual advantage, and ever make it manifest, that the cause of the Redeemer is dear to you, and that his glory is the great object

of your desire. Let none have occasion to say, that you can freely converse on all subjects except those, which are of the deepest interest to the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. Improve every favorable opportunity of presenting the claims of religion to those who are destitute of its saving influence. Regard such with the tenderest compassion. Manifest a spirit of love towards them and convince them, that you sincerely desire their happiness. Be judicious in regard to the time and manner of introducing religious conversation, otherwise you might awaken or strengthen prejudices which would be of essential injury to those whom you wish to benefit.

The direction, "Go through the world with your eyes and ears open," is worthy to be heeded by you. Be docile, and gather up items of knowledge from every source of instruction within your reach. Remember the remark, "*Fas est ab hoste doceri.*"

I conclude this communication with some remarks on the manner in which you should spend your vacations ; I mean those, which are not occupied in teaching. When it can be done, a portion of the time may be spent in useful and profitable

labor. This will give relaxation to the mind, and vigor to the body, and prepare you to engage with greater energy in your studies in term time. Reading may profitably engage a part of your attention. This may be miscellaneous, as your course of reading when at college will be more systematic and regular; and your object in it should be amusement, instruction, and improvement. Spend a portion of your time in social intercourse; in visiting your neighbors and friends and in conversing with them. An exchange of thoughts on important topics, and in the common civilities and courtesies of life, is, in a variety of ways, beneficial. You will find it useful, also, to devote to composition some of your most happy hours for it. A talent at writing is very important for you to possess, and this cannot be acquired without practice. Dr. Chalmers observes, "We are first to import knowledge, then to export it. Write daily and elaborately if only for one hour. Avoid verbiage; do not multiply, but select your words, and lop off redundancies as you would scatter chaff." In speaking on these topics, lord Bacon truly remarks, "Reading makes a full man; conversation a ready man; writing an exact man."

In all your intercourse, in all your plans, in all your movements, and in all you say and do, have regard to the glory of God and the welfare of mankind. Thus you will answer the end of your creation, and render yourselves blessings to the world.

LETTER XVII.

BODILY EXERCISE.

DEAR BRETHREN,

As man is composed of body and mind, there must be the suitable exercise of both, to the enjoyment of perfect health. Among the laboring classes of the community, the corporeal powers are subjected to disproportionate exercise, and, consequently, the mind is stunted and enfeebled. With students the converse is true. Their minds are unduly exercised, and their bodies, consequently, become sickly and feeble, and, by sympathy, their intellectual powers are unfavorably affected. "Man," says Doct. Buchan, "is evidently not formed for continual thought more than for perpetual action, and would be as soon worn out by the one as the other." Bodily exercise, then, is highly worthy of the consideration of all who are pur-

suing a course of study and mental discipline. In discussing this subject, from its nature, I may be allowed to adduce the testimony of those who have long been conversant with it, and are more competent to judge in the case than myself. This is my only apology for quoting so largely from their writings. Speaking of the importance of exercise to students, Doct. Sewall of the Medical College, Washington, D. C., says, "The neglect of exercise has been the ruin of thousands of literary men, and has deprived our country of some of its richest ornaments." The testimony of Dr. Miller of the Theological Seminary, Princeton, is, "I should say of those who deserve the character of close students, full one half, if not more, injure themselves by an injudicious neglect of exercise." Professor Newman of Bowdoin College, says, "The records of this college furnish sad testimony as to the consequences of neglected exercise. Many, and those, too, of our most promising Alumni, have here laid the foundation of protracted illness and of death." The Rev. Mr. Gallaudet of Hartford, Ct., remarks, "So far as my personal observation has extended, I should consider it perfectly safe to say, that three-fourths of our diligent students impair their health by insufficient exercise, and probably it would be

nearer the truth to call the proportion nine-tenths." Says Dr. Keith of the Theological Seminary, near Alexandria, D. C., "I have never known a close student, who did not sooner or later destroy himself, if he neglected exercise." Doct. Reynolds, a distinguished physician of Boston, says, "Every fact presented by the pathology of the diseases of literary men, confirms the opinion, that the neglect of physical culture lies at the foundation." I adduce here the testimony of only one more individual, Doct. Alden, a highly respectable physician of Randolph, Ms. "It has fallen to my lot, to stand by the bedside of a promising young man, preparing for the ministry, and wipe from his pale forehead the cold sweat of death, and perform the last sad office of friendship, over whose grave it ought to be inscribed, for the benefit of the living, 'Lost to the church for want of appropriate exercise.'" Of how many theological students this would be a just monumental inscription!

Of the manner in which exercise affects the human system, I would speak in the language of physicians, which I quote from the New Edinburgh Encyclopedia. "A due proportion of exercise we find to be necessary to the perfect action of every function both of body and mind; by its *excess* they are exhausted and fall into premature

decay ; while by the *want* of it, their vigor is impaired, the body becomes incapable of maintaining itself in health, and the mind partakes of the languor and inactivity of the body. Although each extreme may be, perhaps, equally injurious, yet the greater number of diseases that fall under our inspection, originate from this latter cause ; and its first effects are generally manifested upon the functions that are subservient to the nutritive system. By this means, the body loses its proper supply of matter, and both its physical constitution, and its vital powers, are immediately affected. The secretions of all kinds become deficient in quantity, and changed in their quality ; the circulation proceeds with a languid current ; and consequently both the muscles and the nerves are deprived of their due proportion of arterial blood to support the contractibility of the former, and the sensibility of the latter." An eminent physician has said, " A certain degree of energy in the circulation of the blood is necessary to high health. This energy should be well balanced, and it should exist in all the organs. If the action of one part be high, and that of another be low, the balance of health is destroyed, and disorder is the consequence. By exercise, this balance is in a measure preserved, and the required vigor of the circulation

is maintained. If the circulation in the voluntary muscles, and the organs of digestion and secretion be allowed to languish for want of exercise, their power of performing their appropriate offices becomes enfeebled, and hence an almost nameless variety of symptoms, indicating impaired health, may follow."

That bodily exercise is essential to the preservation of health most persons will admit, yet there are many, especially among students, who do not devote to it that time and attention, which its importance requires, and who do not, as to its nature and tendency, adopt that exercise which is best adapted to produce beneficial results. That such exercise may be productive of the most salutary effects to students, an attention to several things in regard to it is of special importance.

1. It should be general, or such as to affect the system generally.

Partial exercise, or the exercise of only a part of the physical system, will be but partially salutary in its effects; as, for instance, walking. This operates principally upon the lower limbs, and in them the good is chiefly felt. True, there is, in some respects, and to some degree, a general effect; but the arms, the chest, the trunk of the human frame, are not exercised to any very considerable extent.

That kind of exercise which affects all parts of the physical system, and to a suitable degree, whether in the form of gymnastics, or agricultural and mechanical labor, is to be preferred. A writer in the second number of the *Journal of Health*, says, "To render exercise appropriate, during health, it is necessary that motion be communicated to every part susceptible of it; that the breast be dilated beyond the usual bounds of rest; that all the muscles attain the utmost degree of their extension and contraction; that strength, of course, be exerted, and enjoy all its developments. The effects of such exercise, when not carried to the extent of producing undue fatigue, are to promote the circulation of the fluids throughout the body, to render the digestion of food more easy and perfect; to ensure the nutrition of every part of the system, and to enable perspiration and the other excretions to take place with regularity."

2. Exercise should be systematic and regular.

The time devoted to it should have its appropriate season, and be regularly observed. Says the *Journal of Health*, "We are satisfied by intimate experience, and we may add, by personal suffering, that sad injustice is done to human nature, in the common system of education, by a neglect of suitable and regular physical exercise."

Professor Hitchcock of Amherst College, remarks, "A large proportion of diligent, close students, with whom I have met, have impaired their health and usefulness, by a deficiency or irregularity of exercise." The Directors of the American Education Society, in their Thirteenth Annual Report, in contemplating the early graves of thirty of their beneficiaries, are led to speak of the great importance of uniting exercise with study. They say, "A larger number still will follow their example, and thousands of dollars will be spent without effect, in future years, unless more effectual measures are taken to unite systematic exercise with study. They would not undertake to decide what those measures should be, in every case. But they cannot doubt, that if a farm or workshop, or both, were appended to every academy, college and seminary in the land, and placed under such regulations as to secure the regular and cheerful attention of indigent young men, who have been accustomed in early life to labor, the sacrifice of health and life, which is now the cause of so much lamentation, would, in a great measure, cease."

3. Exercise should be vigorous, but not violent nor excessive.

The exercise of students should be natural. Walking is of this description, and is highly bene-

ficial. "It is one of the best and most convenient methods of taking exercise to which sedentary men can resort; and whatever other mode may be introduced, this should not be neglected. The frequent opportunities which it affords for social intercourse among the members of the same institution, or for solitude and reflection, render it peculiarly pleasant and profitable." The mind is diverted and interested by seeing new and various objects, the lower limbs are fully exercised, the other parts of the system partially, and gentle perspiration is produced. Riding horseback is very useful, especially so for the purposes of regaining health. It is probably the best of all exercises for invalids. But more vigorous exercise is needed, such as is attendant upon the use of the axe, the saw, the plane, the utensils of a farm. This will operate upon the chest, inflate the lungs, and set in motion the whole body. Indolent, listless motion will be of no advantage. There must be vigorous action, throughout the whole frame; though violent and excessive exercise should not be practised. The latter cannot be endured by the constitution with impunity. Hence it is found in modern times that gymnastic exercises are frequently injurious. Not even the athletic Greeks and Romans could use them but with caution. Severe and protracted

labors [are bad. In exercising we should begin moderately, and leave off before great fatigue or exhaustion takes place. In this respect, an old but quaint rule is worthy to be regarded. "The lean should exercise *ad ruborem*, that is, till the body and spirits are gently heated; for that will help to fatten them: and the fat, *ad sudorem*, that is, till they perspire, for that will help to reduce them, and consequently extenuate the body."

4. Exercise should be taken daily.

Exercise that is only occasional will not answer the purposes of preserving or restoring health. Neither will it do so, if it be periodical, provided any considerable time elapse between the periods of exercise. As there must be daily food for the sustenance of the body; so there must be daily muscular action for the preservation of its tone and energy. This is something which cannot be performed by proxy; nor can it all be done at once. "Every student ought to make it a point to fail no oftener in his daily exercise than he does in his regular meals; since his digestion requires the exercise as much as his stomach does the food." The constitution, health and temperament of individuals being different, will require that the time devoted to daily exercise be varied. Some persons may receive all the advantages from a daily exercise of

one hour, which others would derive from two or three hours employed in the same way. Each individual should ascertain how much is necessary to his own health and should then allow to it, its appropriate time and season. It is the universal opinion of physicians, that exercise should be daily, and their opinion generally is, that about two or three hours employed in manual labor, or exercise in some way equivalent to it, is needful. Says Doct. Mussey of Dartmouth college, "From two to four hours in a day may be most advantageously employed in exercise." This testimony is confirmed by Doct. Jackson of Boston. He remarks, "Three hours a day would not give too much time for exercise to a student." These two or three hours of daily exercise should not be taken at once; but at two or three different times during the day; and the most suitable seasons are a little before meals. This is the opinion of medical gentlemen in the present day, and it was also the opinion of the ancients. Says Hippocrates, *ὁ ποτος πρὶν ἡγασθῶ*—let exercise precede the taking of food. A question here arises, Can two or three hours in a day be spent in bodily exercise, and a proper attention also be paid to the whole routine of studies, recitations, lectures, etc., now established at our institutions? In answering

this question I would adopt as my own the language of the late Rev. Dr. Cornelius, in his Address before the Association of Students for Manual Labor, at the Theological Seminary, Andover : " A great mistake has, I apprehend, been committed, in regard to this point, by students, and by the instructors and overseers of seminaries of learning. The best and much the largest portion of time has been allotted to other objects ; so that exercise has been either neglected entirely, or very imperfectly attended to. In how many institutions would a student find it impossible to devote three or four hours to exercise, were he ever so much disposed to take it, without interfering with hours for sleep, or meals, or study, or some other object of primary arrangement ? The truth is, that the founders and governors of most seminaries of learning have made no positive provision whatever for taking exercise. Their laws and regulations are silent in regard to it.* If the student is disposed to exercise three hours a day, and can contrive to gain time by stealth or some other way, he can enjoy the privilege ; but he derives little or no encouragement either from the authority or the example of his superiors, and hence he is easily discouraged from making any systematic attempts. Indeed it has been found

difficult in this seminary, (Theological Seminary, Andover,) where the value of exercise is highly appreciated, to find space enough unoccupied by other duties, to admit of the small term of one hour and a half for mechanical exercise." The same may be said of colleges and theological seminaries generally. "There must be a change in this respect. .Instructors and overseers of literary and professional schools must give to exercise a prominent place in their arrangements; they must make room for it in the regular employments of each day, and throw the weight of their whole influence into the scale in favor of it, or it is to be feared, that systematic exercise can never be associated permanently with the studies of those who are placed under their care."

5. Exercise should be in the open air.

No one acquainted with the human body, especially the constituent parts of the blood, and its general circulation through the system, can for a moment doubt this. Great is the difference between inhaling air which is fresh and pure, and that which is stagnant and impure. The effects either beneficial or detrimental, will correspond with such difference. Says Doct. Reese of New York, "The principal cause of dyspepsy and kindred diseases, among students, may be

defined to be the want of exercise in open air." "Mechanical labor in an open workshop, if inferior, in its invigorating effects, to the labor of the field, is still an excellent substitute, and must in certain cases be more convenient." "To give three or four hours per day to bodily exercise in open air," says Professor Hitchcock, "is a point of the last importance to their (students') health of body and mind.—The bracing influence of morning air has always been celebrated, but not overrated. It is nature's grand restorative tonic; and ordinarily the only one that should be used by the nervous invalid." If you walk then, dear brethren, let it be in the open air; if you work, let it be in the open air; if your employment is mechanical, let your workshop be properly ventilated; and then you may expect that salutary effects will follow.

6. Exercise should be convenient and agreeable.

Unless exercise be convenient and agreeable, there will be but little corporeal or mental benefit. It should be convenient, that is, such as can be practised without much trouble. This is necessary in order to secure prompt attention. Where much time is required to be spent in preparing dress, machinery, etc., for exercise, it will never be engaged in with interest, regularity or punctuality.

In this respect, walking has decidedly the advantage. All things are at once ready, and you may enter upon the exercise with alacrity in the open air, inhaling the pure breezes of heaven, and gazing upon all the wonders of creation around you. Horticultural pursuits are attended with the next least inconvenience. Here again you have much to gratify the eye and the taste. The advantage of the workshop is, you can take your exercise, "whether the weather be fair or inclement, whether the earth be drenched with rain or buried deep in snow, and whether it be swept by the keen blasts of winter, or scorched by the sultry heat of a summer's sun."

Exercise, too, should be agreeable, that it may be a recreation, as well as a duty. If it cannot be performed with cheerfulness and pleasure, it will not be accompanied with any salutary effects. The influence of the passions and affections on the health is great. If the mind reluctates, little good will be done to the body. "Task exercises," says a writer in the *Journal of Health*, "under which denomination may be included all those which are resorted to merely for the sake of muscular exertion, bear pretty much the same relation to health, as the castigations of the penitent do to piety or virtue." "The fact is, the mind must be

turned off from its ordinary routine of thought, at the same time that the body is put in motion, or the latter will receive but little benefit. The mathematical or metaphysical chain of reasoning must be thrown aside when man leaves his study, as much as his books on these subjects; and amusing, and altogether different ideas must succeed—ideas that neither pall by their dullness, nor fatigue by their abstruseness." If a person engages in exercise from compulsion, no matter by what he is compelled, if health is the grand object he seeks, that object will not be obtained. And exercise should be adapted to the peculiar tastes and circumstances of different individuals. What would be pleasant to one, would perhaps be irksome to another.

7. Exercise should be manly or dignified.

In exercise as well as in every thing else, regard should be had to propriety and circumspection of conduct. Many of the amusements which are resorted to by young people, though serviceable in regard to the exercise they afford, would not comport with the dignity of character which should ever be sustained by pious students, preparing for the ministry. Nor would they, it is presumed, be agreeable to the inclination of such. My own views on this subject would lead me to

class among these, the childish sports, boyish feats of agility and strength, gymnastic and athletic exercises generally. The benefit to be derived from them can scarcely be an equivalent for the time spent in a round of manœuvres so frivolous and insipid as they are in themselves. In selecting the kind of exercise to be practised, regard should be had to decorum. Professor Hough, in an address, delivered before the Mechanical Association of Middlebury college, says, "The exercise of the play-ground is, in most seminaries at least, usually surrendered by the more advanced and sedate members, to the younger class of students; and they regard themselves, when uniting with these in their recreations, as submitting to a kind of debasement, of which they feel half ashamed; and they engage in them with infrequency and heartlessness, or with reluctance. It has hence been the fact, that in general the athletic sports of running, and jumping, and playing at ball, and others of a similar character, have been well-nigh relinquished by those, who most need exercise, to those whose habits and whose health least required such expedients. It has hence too, proved the fact, that the system of gymnastic exercises, which some time since was introduced into some of our colleges with such

high anticipations, and on an apparatus for which, so much expense was in some cases bestowed, has enjoyed merely an ephemeral celebrity, and has already, unless the information which I have received has misled me, sunk into neglect."

8. Exercise in degree, should bear a proportion to the quantum of food received.

It is a remark of lord Bacon, "Our exercise should bear an exact proportion to our diet, and our diet, in like manner to our exercise; or in other words, he who eats and drinks plentifully, should use much exercise; and he who cannot use exercise, should, in order to preserve his health, live abstemiously." With this sentiment accords the saying of Hippocrates: *Homo edens sanus esse non potest, nisi etiam laborat.* This doctrine is rational, and is universally maintained by gentlemen of the medical faculty.

9. Exercise to be beneficial should be profitable in a pecuniary point of view.

Men will not cheerfully and contentedly work without compensation, and if the mind be not satisfied, the body will not be profited. A person, indeed, can walk or ride with no other object in view but his health, and be benefited by it; but he cannot work with no other object in view and be benefited by it, at least to any considerable

degree. Strange as this may seem, it is confirmed by experience and observation. A striking fact occurs to my mind : A clergyman, feeble in body from dyspeptic and other habits, applied for medical assistance. The physician recommended, that he should take daily exercise—work regularly in the garden of the gentleman with whom he boarded, saying, that such a course of exercise would restore him to health. The clergyman immediately complied with the prescription, and followed it for a considerable time, but grew worse rather than better. He called on his physician again, and told him the result. The physician, confident that he understood his patient's disease, and that he had prescribed the proper remedy for his restoration to health, and thinking that his patient labored in vain, because he spent his strength for nought or no pecuniary emolument, said to him, you must purchase a piece of ground and work on the land you own yourself, and then you will recover. He did so, and a recovery was effected. In the first instance, the clergyman knew he was working day after day to no pecuniary profit, and his mind was disquieted, and his bodily system, by sympathy, was unfavorably affected. In the latter case he knew, that when he planted, God adding his blessing, he should eat

the fruit thereof. He went, therefore, about his labor cheerfully, and happy was the effect on his corporeal system.

It is not to be expected, that such results would follow in every similar case, because circumstances attending them might be very different; but it is believed, that such results, in a great degree, would generally follow.

In view of these remarks, I have not so much confidence in the salutary effects on health of manual labor institutions as some have. The pecuniary profit is so little for the labor performed, that I have seldom found students, at such institutions, satisfied with the compensation they received, or disposed to acknowledge, that they were much benefited in their health. In these institutions there are intrinsic difficulties, which cannot be removed, and which prevent the good anticipated.

The results of such exercise as has been described are great and good.

1. In respect to health.

From the testimonies which have already been adduced, we cannot doubt the happy effects of such exercise in the preservation and promotion of health. The advantages which are to be derived from the enjoyment of perfect health,

render more valuable and important the means of securing them.

2. In respect to life.

If exercise is necessary to the promotion of health, its tendency must of course be to prolong life, and also to render life much more desirable, happy, and useful. With the enjoyment of health is connected a good flow of animal spirits. These not only make life happy to those who are thus favored, but they enable them to engage with cheerfulness, energy, and zeal in the duties of life, and thus to accomplish more fully the great end of their existence.

3. In respect to vigor of body and mind.

That suitable exercise has a tendency to promote vigor of body and mind, observation and experience can abundantly attest. To the efficiency of individuals, such vigor is of inestimable importance, that they may fill up life with extensive usefulness. A vigorous mind may originate large and important plans of usefulness, but if not connected with vigor of body, however excellent such plans may be, they may fail of success from being too faintly attempted, or too feebly prosecuted. But when they are both happily combined, great things may not only be attempted, but accomplished. Where there is in any indi-

vidual *mens sana in sano corpore*, much may reasonably be expected.

4. In respect to an increase of knowledge.

President Griffin, of Williams college, says, "If men would be content to divide their time between study and labor, and dispense with play, I am confident they would accelerate their progress in learning by three hours a day devoted to labor." It is the opinion of President Chapin, of Columbian college, that "three hours spent in exercise each day, would rather accelerate than retard progress in study." Professor Ripley, of the Theological Seminary, Newton, remarks, "Three hours each day, and for some students, and at some seasons, even four hours, if properly distributed, so far from eventually retarding would greatly promote progress in study." Says the Rev. Dr. Green, of Philadelphia, "I have not a doubt that three hours a day, spent in proper bodily exercise, so far from interfering eventually with progress in the acquisition of knowledge, of whatever kind, would promote it in a very important degree." Dr. Miller, of the Theological Seminary, Princeton, thus expresses himself on this subject, "Instead of progress in study being retarded by three hours' daily appropriate exercise, it would be aided and accelerated."

In addition to greater acquisition of classical and theological knowledge, much information of mechanical and agricultural pursuits will be obtained by a proper attention to laborious exercise.

Such are my views of this vastly important subject, and I pray God that similar views may be impressed upon the mind of every student in the land.

If any of you, dear brethren, have not already adopted some plan of regular daily exercise, I would entreat you to attend to this subject immediately. Though you may not at present perceive any injurious effects from neglecting it, yet your neglect of it must be detrimental. May you in this as in all other respects, be directed in that way, which will be subservient to your temporal and spiritual interests, and the highest glory of your Maker.

LETTER XVIII.

REVIVALS IN LITERARY INSTITUTIONS.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Revivals of religion in our literary institutions, on account of their glorious effects, must be a subject of deep interest to all the friends of Zion. Who, that has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, can contemplate it without intense emotions. That there may be pentecostal seasons in them, should be the fervent, importunate and persevering prayer of all who have access to the throne of divine grace.

Permit me to call your attention to some of the reasons why revivals of religion in our colleges are desirable, and why efforts should be made to promote them.

1. The number of young men connected with

these institutions is very great, while the most of them are in an unconverted state.

There are in the United States, *eighty-eight* incorporated colleges or universities now in operation to a greater or less extent, having in their academical department about 7,000 students. Probably more than one-fourth, or nearly two thousand of them are pious. These individuals, however, need greater sanctification. Revivals of religion will have a tendency to promote this—to elevate the piety of all those, who come within their happy influence. And probably about 5,000 of these beloved youth are still in an unconverted state, “having no hope and without God in the world,” and are thronging the way to eternal destruction. Human efforts alone are inadequate to save them. They must perish, unless God interpose by his grace. Who then will not pray for the conversion of these dear youth, each soul of whom is infinitely more valuable than the whole world, and destined to eternal weal or woe? Who will not wrestle on their behalf with the Angel of the covenant, and say, in the language of prevailing Israel, “I will not let thee go except thou bless them.”

2. The young men who are educated in col-

leges will have a powerful influence on the community.

This remark is true, whatever their profession or business in life. They will be more than ordinary individuals, and consequently, their influence on society will be great. In colleges are educated not only ministers, but also legislators, judges, lawyers, physicians. Every one who receives collegiate honors will affect, by his opinions and example, at least a thousand souls around him. These institutions will, therefore, be fountains of corruption and death, or of purity and life. How important, then, that "holiness to the Lord," be inscribed on all our halls of science, that these fountains be pure, sending forth healthful streams to make glad the city of God. But should the Holy Spirit be withheld from them, they will be like the mountains of Gilboa, having no dew nor rain. Prayer, therefore, should be made without ceasing of the churches unto God, that those who enjoy these advantages may be holy men, and thus be prepared to exert a holy influence.

3. The number of those who enter the Christian ministry will be greatly increased by revivals of religion in colleges.

The number and proportion of graduates who

have entered the ministry in this country since its settlement, have been, according to the triennial catalogues, as follows, viz. from 1620 to 1720, one hundred years, there were graduated at Harvard and Yale colleges, 814 individuals, of whom 436 entered the ministry, that is, more than one-half; from 1720 to 1770, fifty years, there were graduated at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Brown, and Columbia colleges, 3,197 individuals, of whom 1,135 entered the ministry, that is, little more than one-third; from 1770 to 1810, forty years, there were graduated at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Brown, Dartmouth, Dickinson, Williams, Union, Bowdoin, Middlebury, and South Carolina colleges, 7,103, of whom 1,418 entered the ministry, that is, one-fifth; from 1800 to 1810, ten years, there were graduated at the colleges above named, 2,792, of whom only 453 entered the ministry, that is, one-sixth part. Not a single clergyman was educated at William and Mary college, Virginia, during the 20 years preceding 1818. Since 1810, about which time the benevolent enterprises in this country commenced their operations, the proportion of graduates who have entered the ministry has been increasing. This thought is worthy of particular consideration. Probably more than a quarter of those who pass

through a collegiate course of education at the present time will engage in preaching the gospel. But a far greater change must be effected in this respect in order to attain to the blessed state of the early days of this country. Revivals of religion in our colleges must be greatly multiplied and extended. In this way, thousands might be secured for Christ and the church in the ministry, and speedily too, and comparatively with little expense. These thousands might preach the gospel to as many millions of people, and be instrumental in the salvation of great multitudes of undying souls. Let, then, every one who has an interest at the throne of grace, pray particularly for revivals of religion in our colleges, that the precious youth connected with them may be converted to God—pray the Lord of the harvest, that he will raise up, qualify, and send forth, laborers into his harvest, that the earth may be gathered.

4. Through the blessed effects of revivals of religion in our colleges, their design will be better answered.

The true intention of these institutions is, to promote piety, virtue, and knowledge, and the last as subservient to the others. This appears evident from the charter and constitution of them. Nearly all the colleges in this country have been

established by pious men, having specially in view the education of young men for the ministry. President Edwards, the elder, in his account of the revival of religion in New England in his day, remarks : “ I would say in general, that it appears to me, that care should be taken some way or other, that those societies ” (colleges) “ should be so regulated, that they should, in fact, be nurseries of piety ; otherwise, they are fundamentally ruined and undone, as to their main and most essential end. They ought to be so constituted, that vice and idleness have no living there ; which are intolerable in societies where the main design is to train up youth in Christian knowledge and eminent piety, to fit them to be pastors of the flock of the blessed Jesus. If we pretend to have any colleges at all, under any notion of training up youth for the ministry, there should be some way found out that should certainly prevent its being thus. There is a great deal of pains taken to teach the scholars human learning ; there ought to be as much and more care, thoroughly to educate them in religion, and lead them to true and eminent holiness. If the main design of these nurseries is, to bring up persons to teach Christ, then it is of the greatest importance, that there should be care and pains taken to bring those that

are educated to the knowledge of Christ. It has been common in our public prayers to call these societies the schools of the prophets. And if they are schools to train up young men to be prophets, certainly there ought to be extraordinary care taken to train them up to be Christians. And I cannot see why it is not on all accounts fit and convenient for the governors and instructors of the colleges particularly, singly and frequently to converse with the students about the state of their souls." Such were the views of one of the most eminent divines who ever lived in this or any other country ; and such evidently is and ought to be the principal design in the establishment of our colleges.

5. God does hear and answer prayer.

He has said " Ask, and it shall be given you," and he has expressly promised the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. " What things soever ye desire," (according to the will of God,) " when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." " And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for him, and he will save us ; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." That God has answered prayer offered for our institutions of learning, is strikingly

manifest. His declaration has been verily fulfilled, "Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." In some instances, revivals have commenced on the very day of the concert. The Lord has been present by the special influences of his Spirit. In a single revival at one of our colleges, about one hundred and twenty individuals were hopefully converted to God. Since the establishment of the Annual Concert of Prayer for Colleges, in 1823, glorious things for Zion have been accomplished, through the effusions of the Holy Ghost ;—much talent and influence have been consecrated to Christ and the church.

What powerful motives to efforts for the promotion of revivals of religion in institutions of learning ! Do you ask, dear brethren, what part you can take in this glorious cause, and how you shall accomplish what it is your duty to perform, I reply—

1. Look into your own hearts and ascertain what is your spiritual state.

Your own iniquities may hinder the blessing you seek. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," says David. Examine yourselves and see what evils rankle there. Probe your hearts to the very bottom, and learn

the feelings and motives by which you are actuated. In respect to whatever evil there may be in you, repent and reform. Get down into the dust and truly humble yourselves before God. Let each of you ask himself the following questions. Do I desire a revival of religion in college? Has my deportment manifested it? Have I felt, and prayed, and acted as I ought? What can I do? What ought I to do? What am I willing to do? When shall I begin to do it?

2. Strive to become deeply impressed with the worth of souls.

Think of the exalted nature, the noble capacity, the eternal duration, the everlasting happiness or misery of a single soul and the infinite price that was paid for it. Contemplate the greatness, glory, and worth of an innumerable number of such spirits in comparison with all things earthly. Consider these things till you are deeply affected with the worth of souls.

3. Look on your impenitent classmates and see their awful sinfulness, and the everlasting wrath that consequently impends them, and the glory that will await them on believing.

Get into your minds a deep sense of the wailings of the damned, and the joys of the redeemed. See that a man may possess the talents of an angel,

and yet in the highest sense be a fool ; may be a giant in intellect, and, without holiness, a giant madman. Transport yourselves to the world of light, love, and blessedness ; then to the world of darkness, hate and wo ;—and by the motives of each be moved.

4. Become greatly distressed in view of the dreadful condition of your impenitent classmates.

While you contemplate their ruin, let your spirit be stirred in you, and let your feelings be enkindled to intenseness—flame as from a furnace. And your distress shall be followed with joy ; for “ as soon as Zion travails, she brings forth her children.”

When you have become thus suitably affected, you will—

5. Pray for the conversion of these individuals.

Let your supplications be offered in faith and hope, with fervency and importunity, with the feelings which God is represented as possessing when he said, “ How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ! ” Pray with the spirit of Jeremiah, when he pathetically exclaimed, “ O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.” Pray, believing that the prayers of generations are about

to be answered in the conversion of this world. And thus wrestling, you shall prevail.

6. Endeavor to excite Christians to make all suitable efforts for revivals in colleges.

Converse and pray with them on this subject with deep feeling. Being affected yourselves, you will affect your pious classmates. Obtain from them some pledge, that they will live in a more holy manner, and do more for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

7. Converse and pray with the impenitent.

In this matter seek wisdom from on high, for you will need wisdom to guide you. Always bear in mind, that the way of the Holy Spirit to the hearts of sinners is through the hearts of Christians. Go and converse with your impenitent classmates affectionately and faithfully, strongly desiring their salvation. There is an eloquence in feeling, as well as in action. Tell them you have a message from God, and deliver it in the spirit of your Master ; and by your overflowing soul, your affectionate earnestness and faithfulness, prove to them the reality of religion, and of your religion ! Watch for opportunities thus to do them good. Summon up your whole Christian influence on behalf of their spiritual interests, and you shall not labor in vain, nor spend your strength for

nought. You will multiply yourselves and your influence exceedingly, in promoting revivals of religion in our colleges. Thus pray and labor in faith and hope, for they all shall yet be "consecrated to Christ and the church."

LETTER XIX.

ANNUAL CONCERT OF PRAYER FOR COLLEGES.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The particular object of my present communication, is to call your attention to the Annual Concert of Prayer for colleges and other seminaries of learning. This Concert was established indirectly through the instrumentality of the Directors of the American Education Society, and its observance has been promoted by them until it has come to be very generally regarded with deep interest by all evangelical denominations of Christians in this land. It has, too, awakened a deep interest in many of those who have gone forth as missionaries to the heathen. May the time soon arrive when this consecrated season shall be universally observed by all Christians, and be

accompanied with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven on all literary institutions.

I invite your attention to some brief remarks in respect to the origin and progress of this Concert of Prayer; its happy effects; and the manner in which it should be observed.

In the Annual Reports of the American Education Society, from its commencement to the present time, there has been published much important statistical information respecting colleges and theological seminaries. This very early excited a spirit of supplication among Christians on their behalf, and a Concert of Prayer for the special blessing of Heaven on these institutions was established, to be observed every Sabbath morning. As the probable result of this, at least to some extent, there were frequent and powerful revivals of religion in our colleges. These cheered and stimulated the children of God to perseverance in their supplications. Encouraged by the signs of the times, and desirous of perpetuating the interest awakened, and the influences of the Holy Spirit which had been imparted, an Agent of the American Education Society, after consulting on the subject with the Special Committee of its Directors, addressed a Circular to presidents of colleges, to ministers, and others, inviting them to

observe a day of special fasting and prayer for these institutions of learning. The following sentence is contained in the letter. "That this object" (revivals of religion in colleges) "may be more deeply and extensively felt, not only at the colleges, but among ministers and Christians generally, a number of the friends of Zion have agreed to set apart the twenty-seventh day of February, 1823, as a season of fasting and special and united prayer, that God will pour out his Spirit on the colleges of our country the present year more powerfully than ever before." The request was complied with to a considerable extent, and thus commenced this annual season, favored of Heaven by the gift of the Holy Ghost to the conversion of multitudes in our literary institutions.

The reasons why the last Thursday of February was selected as the day of this Annual Concert, were the following. The second term of study in the colleges has then commenced. The winter vacation has elapsed, and the members of the institutions have returned to their classical pursuits. At this time students are generally more regular in their habits than at any other season of the year. This was the time, too, when revivals of religion had usually taken place in colleges. This fact was considered an indication of the will of

Heaven in relation to the time to be thus consecrated. Thursday was selected as being less occupied with religious engagements than either of the other days of the week, and as being the day usually observed on other occasions as a season of fasting and prayer.

In the American Quarterly Register and the Reports of the American Education Society, this subject has annually been presented before the community. The religious newspapers of the country generally, have advocated the observance of this season of fasting and prayer. Resolutions recommending its observance, have been adopted by different Education Societies, and by many ecclesiastical and ministerial bodies.

The Annual Concert of Fasting and Prayer for colleges and other institutions of learning, is now therefore established, by the concurrent voice of the churches, throughout this land. It is also specially sanctified by the great Head of the church, as will appear by the blessed effects which have followed it.

Subsequent to the establishment of the Sabbath Morning Concert of Prayer for colleges, the Spirit of God was poured out, and animating were the results. From 1820 to 1823 inclusive, there were, to some extent, revivals of religion in Dartmouth,

Middlebury, Williams, Amherst, Yale, Union, Hamilton, Dickinson, Jefferson, (Pa.) Washington, (Pa.) and Hampden-Sydney Colleges, College of New Jersey, Brown University, and the University of Ohio. Some of these revivals extended into the year 1824. In the years 1824 and 1825, there was a revival of religion in five different colleges, besides more than usual seriousness in a number of others. In 1826, there was a revival of religion in six colleges; in 1827, in four; in 1828, in five. In 1829 and 1830, the Holy Spirit seems to have forsaken, in a very great degree, the institutions of learning. There were in them apparently but few conversions, and no revivals to any considerable extent. But the Lord had not withdrawn his Holy Spirit from them forever. He had mercy still in reserve. The year 1831 was emphatically a "year of the right hand of the Most High." Nineteen colleges, to a greater or less degree, were visited with the effusions of the Holy Ghost, and it was computed that between 350 and 400 of their students were hopefully converted to God. In one college, a revival commenced the very day of the Concert. In 1832, God poured out his Spirit on some of our institutions of learning, though the number thus favored was small. The Holy Spirit descended on a few

colleges in 1833, and some souls were converted. A promising state of religious feeling existed at the time also in other institutions. In 1834, revivals were enjoyed in a number of colleges, and many students were brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. During the year 1835, eleven colleges were blessed with revivals, and between one and two hundred students were hopefully brought into the kingdom of Christ. There were revivals of religion in five or six colleges the last year.

Since 1820, there have been revivals in the following institutions, viz. Bowdoin, Dartmouth, Middlebury, Williams, Amherst, Yale, Union, Hamilton, Geneva, Dickinson, Jefferson, (Pa.) Washington, (Pa.) Hampden-Sydney, Washington, (Va.) Columbian, Oakland, Centre, Western Reserve, Kenyon, Granville, Marietta, South Hanover, East Tennessee, Illinois, Wabash, and Randolph-Macon Colleges, the College of New Jersey, Brown University, Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution, University of North Carolina, University of Vermont, University of Georgia, University of Ohio, Wesleyan University, and Miami University. During this period, not less, probably, than 1,500 young men in these institutions have hopefully experienced the renewing

influences of the Holy Spirit. Within this same time a large number of youth at academies and the higher schools have also become hopefully pious. In view of such displays of divine grace, who can doubt the efficacy of prayer? Who can doubt that this season consecrated by the church for united supplications on behalf of seminaries of learning, has the approbation and seal of Heaven?

A few suggestions in relation to the manner of observing this Concert will close.

The day should be spent as a season of special fasting and prayer. It is very desirable that a portion of the time should be occupied in retirement by self-examination, acknowledging the mercies of God, confessing sin, petitioning for yourselves, and interceding for others. By attending to these private offices of devotion, you will be better prepared to discharge the public services of the day.

A part of the day should be observed in a public manner in prayer and in listening to addresses and remarks which may be made on the occasion. Most of the time, however, should be appropriated to prayer. This is the great business of the day. If

“Prayer ardent opens heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory, on the consecrated hour
Of man in audience with the Deity,”

what might not be expected, were clouds of holy incense on this day of prayer, to ascend to heaven? Would not the Holy Ghost sanctify our institutions of learning, and consecrate to Christ and the church our young men, now in a course of education? Verily he would. The revivals of religion which have been enjoyed in the colleges, are pledges of his love and earnestness of his pleasure. You should pray for the officers of these institutions, that they may be faithful to the spiritual interests of their pupils. You should pray, too, for pious students, that they may be guided in all wisdom, and honor the religion they profess by a holy and consistent life, and that those especially, who are preparing for the ministry, may be filled with the spirit of Christ, and exhibit it in all their deportment. In your intercessions you should remember, in a very particular manner, those students who are in an unconverted state. Let them be presented in faith before the throne of God; let the most fervent and importunate prayer be offered on their behalf. It is specially for their conversion that this day of Concert was established. In your supplications for literary institutions, confine not your requests to those of the United States, but offer prayers for those of other lands, that God would pour into their fountains of

learning the salt of grace, that streams may thence issue to make glad the city of God. Prayers are now offered by Christians dwelling in heathen lands with deep interest on behalf of our literary institutions at the time of this Annual Concert; and it is believed that the time is not far distant when this Concert of Prayer for colleges and other institutions of learning will be observed by all Protestant Christendom.

If you know of any interesting facts adapted to the occasion, these may be related. It is always proper to speak of the importance of colleges and revivals of religion in them; to tell how they have originated and continued; how they have multiplied, and how they have resulted in the conversion of precious souls. You can state the deficiency of laborers for the harvest, and the importance of praying the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth more laborers into the harvest. As a means of this, you can mention the necessity of the sanctification of literary institutions, that young men in suitable numbers may be furnished for the ministry.

And now, dear brethren, by a regard to the glory of God, the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the salvation of undying souls, be entreated to spend the day of Annual Concert of

Fasting and Prayer for colleges in the most entire consecration to the glorious objects it has in view. Let the season be hallowed by the most devout spirit, and by the most holy services. Then will the Lord hear, then will the Lord forgive, then will the Lord hearken and do, and defer not for his own sake, and for the sake of the people called by his name; and then will be written on all our halls of science, "Holiness to the Lord of hosts."

LETTER XX.

EFFORTS TO INDUCE YOUNG MEN TO ENTER THE MINISTRY.

DEAR BRETHREN,

When you think of the vast multitudes who are yet unsupplied with the preaching of the gospel, I doubt not that your hearts are moved, and that you long to see the number of those increased who are to carry to them the messages of heavenly mercy. The object of this communication is to invite your attention to the destitution of ministers and to induce you to make special efforts to persuade young men of suitable qualifications to prepare for the Christian ministry.

1. I would first direct your attention to the immense destitution of ministers.

“The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.” “The field is the world”—the great family of man. To gather this field, which

is "white already to harvest," six hundred thousand spiritual reapers are needed, besides those now engaged in this blessed work. This estimate is made upon the ratio of giving only one minister to a thousand souls. Yes, six hundred millions of the human race in Pagan and Mohammedan lands are shrouded in moral darkness in all its varied and horrid appearances, going down to eternal perdition as fast as time can waft them, for want of heralds of mercy to proclaim to them the words of eternal life. Twenty millions of souls, (dreadful thought!) twenty millions of souls annually pass to their everlasting destiny without the knowledge of the Saviour of sinners!

To supply the United States with evangelical teachers, allowing only one minister to a thousand inhabitants, (and ninety years ago there was in New England one liberally educated minister to about every six hundred souls,) six thousand at least are wanting. There are between three and four thousand churches, connected with the Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Episcopalian denominations, which have no settled pastor. No data are before the public, by which to determine very accurately the destitution of ministers in the Methodist denomination; but from the fact, that one preacher is obliged to supply

two and three societies, it would seem that there is a deficiency of ministers with them. In the Southern, Western, and some parts of the Middle States, there is an absolute "famine of hearing the words of the Lord"; and thus is it in the Canadas. The moral desolations are too appalling to particularize or dwell upon. Even in the New England States there is a greater demand for ministers at the present time, than there has been for the last thirty years; and this demand is becoming greater and greater. The population of the United States increases now more than a thousand in a day, or four hundred thousand annually. This has been nearly the ratio of increase for the last ten years. In order then to meet the wants of the country, it will be necessary to raise up not only six thousand ministers to supply the present destitution, besides enough to supply the vacancies made by the decease of pastors from time to time, which are about one hundred and fifty every year; but also four hundred more annually, that is, more than a minister every day. Five hundred and fifty ministers, therefore, must be raised up annually to supply merely the increasing demand of the country, not to say any thing in respect to the supply of its present destitution, or of foreign missionaries.

By the year 1860, the United States will be peopled with thirty millions of inhabitants, if they increase as fast as they have increased the last ten years. And more than half of this mass of population will be west of the Alleghany mountains, where now there are but few ministers of the gospel, but few literary institutions, and but few of the means of grace, and where will continue to be a most awful deficiency, unless special efforts are made to supply it. There also will be the seat of the Beast, another spiritual Babylon, where the mother of harlots may again forge her chains, establish her inquisitions, and practice her abominations. Ministers, the people will have, and if we do not supply them, they will be supplied by the energy of the Jesuits. If this should take place, every right, and privilege, and blessing we inherit from our fathers, procured by their prayers, sufferings, and blood, will be wrested from us, and sacrificed on the shrine of most fearful despotism. There will be a tremendous reaction, awfully disastrous in its effects. The times call for alarm. And now what shall be done? Shall our churches famish for the bread of life? Shall the waste places of our Zion never be built? Shall our beloved country be overspread with Romanism, and be subjected to the superstitions and evil

machinations of Popery? Shall the heathen perish for lack of vision? It must not be. It will not be. The sympathies of Christians cannot always sleep over such desolations. The knowledge of salvation will be imparted to those in our own country, and in other countries, who are destitute of the means of grace. The gospel will be preached to every creature; and prayer, and praise, and salvation shall echo from shore to shore! It is so written in the statute-book of Heaven. But "how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" It is by the foolishness of preaching, God is pleased to save them that believe. What Christian then will not view the subject of educating young men for the sacred ministry with intense interest, and agonize in effort for this great and glorious enterprise! The churches founded by the piety, prayers, and toils of our fathers must not languish and die for want of pastors to feed them with the bread of life. Home Missionary Societies must not be retarded in their progress to evangelize the country for want of laborers. Foreign Missionary Societies must not stop nor be delayed in their operations, because a sufficient

number of men cannot be employed as missionaries. All needed pastors and missionaries must be furnished.

2. To supply this want of ministers, some commendable efforts have been made.

The church has begun to awake to the injunction of her great Head, "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." Private Christians seem to be impressed with this duty and begin to discharge it. Such prayers are now offered from many family altars. Some Christians make a point of praying particularly on the Tuesday of every week for raising up ministers in accordance with a plan of daily family concert for prayer, proposed by the late Rev. Joseph Emerson, of Wethersfield, Ct. The father, who leads in devotion, will, on such occasions, naturally remember his beloved offspring. He will pour out his soul for the conversion of his sons, and that God would raise them up to be pastors after his own heart. Blessed effects are anticipated from such supplications. Ministers now more than formerly remember this subject when they stand up in the great congregation to address the throne of Him who heareth prayer, and unto whom all flesh should come.

For the promotion of this cause, concerts of prayer have been established. The Annual Concert of Prayer for colleges was commenced in 1823, and has of late been very generally observed. The American Education Society, at their annual meeting, in 1833, adopted the following preamble and resolutions :

“ *Whereas*, the dependence of the Christian ministry upon the great Head of the church is entire and constant, and his blessing absolutely necessary to its success ; *and whereas*, the last Thursday of February has been annually set apart, by many of the friends of the Redeemer, as a season of united prayer, for a blessing on the young men of this country, and especially on those in a course of education at our colleges and academies ; therefore,

“ *Resolved*, That it be earnestly recommended to all the young men under patronage of this Society, to observe the last Thursday of February as a day of fasting and prayer, with special reference to the more copious effusions of the Holy Spirit on the young men of this land generally ; but more especially on our literary institutions, that the youth who resort thither for an education, may be sanctified and led to consecrate themselves to the work of the ministry.

“*Resolved*, That the churches of Christ, and all the friends of this Society and of the Redeemer, be affectionately requested to observe this Annual Concert of Prayer.”

This Concert has been followed with glorious results.

A Monthly Concert of Prayer for the promotion of this cause was instituted in 1826, by the beneficiaries of the American Education Society, at the suggestion of the Board of Directors, and has been by them generally observed. The time set apart is a portion of the Tuesday immediately succeeding the first Monday in each month. The particular objects of their prayers are three. First, The beneficiaries are to pray for themselves, that they may be the true disciples of Jesus Christ, be eminently holy, and be distinguished by all the Christian graces; that their minds may be richly furnished with useful and divine knowledge; and that ultimately they may become preachers of righteousness and salvation. Secondly. They are to pray for Education Societies—that they may be succeeded in their great and glorious enterprise, to raise up evangelical, devoted and successful ministers of Jesus Christ, that their officers and agents may have heavenly wisdom to guide them in the path of duty, and holy zeal to inspire them

with activity and energy in the service of the Society, and that all their members and patrons may be richly rewarded for their exertions and contributions. Thirdly. They are to pray that the great Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into the harvest, that it may be gathered;—pray that ministers may be raised up to supply destitute flocks and to go forth as missionaries of the cross into the new settlements of our beloved country, and into the wide fields of pagan darkness;—pray that God will be pleased to pour out his Holy Spirit on our colleges, academies and public institutions of learning, that multitudes of young men now in an impenitent state, may be converted and become heralds of the cross to dying men.

At an annual meeting of the American Education Society in 1827, the following preamble and resolution were adopted :

“ *Whereas* ‘ the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few,’ and the great Head of the church has enjoined it upon his disciples, ‘ Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest,’ *and whereas* the Tuesday immediately succeeding the first Monday of the month is regarded by the beneficiaries of the American Education Society, and by many of the friends of the Redeemer, as a day set apart

for united prayer, that multitudes of young men may be raised up and qualified to preach the gospel, therefore,

“Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to all the young men under the patronage of the Society, to observe some part of the Tuesday immediately succeeding the first Monday of the month, as a special season of prayer, that God would convert young men, and lead multitudes of them to consecrate themselves to the work of the ministry.”

The Pastoral Association of Massachusetts, and other ministerial bodies, have passed the following resolution, recommending the above concert.

• *“Considering* the great and increasing want of ministers of the gospel, to supply our own country and other parts of the world, and the important influence which the American Education Society is destined to exert in raising up ministers of the gospel, therefore,

“Resolved, That we cordially recommend the observance of the Concert of Prayer which is appointed on Tuesday following the first Monday of the month, to pray for the Society, for those under its patronage, and especially, that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into his harvest.”

This Concert is now observed to a very considerable extent.

Various societies for the education of pious indigent young men for the ministry, have been formed and have accomplished much in this glorious enterprise. The American Education Society, which is the most extensive in its operations, has assisted nearly *three thousand* individuals in their course of preparation for the sacred office. More than a *thousand* have finished their studies and entered the ministry. It is assisting at the present time about twelve hundred beneficiaries.—The Board of Education of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church is the next largest institution of this kind. It assisted the last year four or five hundred. Through its patronage, some hundreds, (it has never been stated how many,) have entered the ministry.—The Northern Baptist Education Society, which is one of the oldest in the country, has been instrumental of introducing quite a number into the sacred office. Other Baptist Education Societies are engaging in this work with laudable efforts.—The same spirit is characterizing the Episcopal denomination, which has always been zealous for a thoroughly educated ministry. And the Methodists have recently estab-

lished an Education Society with good prospects of success.

About thirty theological seminaries have been established with the express object in view of raising up for the world an able and faithful ministry. Most of our colleges too have been erected with the express design of aiding this glorious cause.

3. Efforts in proportion to the magnitude of the work to be accomplished must be made.

While there are six hundred millions of Pagans and Mohammedans destitute of a preached gospel; while there are between three and four thousand churches connected with the evangelical denominations of Christians in our own land, calling for pastors to break to them the bread of life; while there is such a demand for ministers from the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, and while the Christian community seem disposed and determined to sustain these benevolent institutions in their operations;—who can but be deeply affected at the consideration, that these operations must be retarded, if they should not languish and die, because heralds of the cross cannot be obtained? Can it be so? Distressing thought! There is one aspect of this subject which can never be contemplated by the

Christian without lively interest. The greater the actual supply of ministers, the greater will be the demand for them till the whole world shall be supplied. The more spiritual reapers there are sent into the field of harvest this year, the more must be sent the next. Blessed be God that it is so! A minister's influence is most valued and sought where best known and enjoyed. To illustrate. When Mississippi or China shall have sixty ministers instead of thirty, the call will be louder for sixty more than it is now for thirty. So it is in respect to all the portions of the world now unsupplied with the gospel. And this, so far from operating as a discouragement to effort, is the best possible stimulus to the active powers of the intelligent Christian. Let it be observed, too, for encouragement, that the number who will engage in this glorious work of evangelizing the world, will increase from year to year, till all shall be brought to bow to the sceptre of Jesus Christ.

Is it true, that the preaching of the gospel is the grand instrument, which God has appointed for the conversion of the world? Why, then, is there no more zeal manifested in raising up preachers of salvation? The revivals of religion have brought into the churches multitudes of young men, who, were they educated, would be able and faithful

teachers of righteousness. Much the larger proportion of these will bury their talents in secular occupations, unless pressed into the service of the ministry. More efforts should be made to lead young men to reflect upon this subject, and to dedicate themselves to this blessed work. While the ministers of the gospel should preach upon it on the Sabbath, present it at their social meetings, at the monthly concert, especially the concert on Tuesday evening, immediately succeeding the first Monday of each month ;—while they should converse particularly with those young men, who are of good natural talents, and “ full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,” and urge upon them their duty ;—while they should be persuaded to do this by the injunctions of the great Head of the church, by the happiness of man in his present state of existence, by the never-ending felicities of those “ who through faith and patience inherit the promises,” and by the interminable agonies of those who perish in their sins,—others are not exonerated from taking a part in this important enterprise. The church is bound to pray more—more sincerely, fervently, importunately and perseveringly ; and to use all other possible efforts in her power for the promotion of this cause. The ministers of the gospel should preach and pray more on this

subject than they ever have done. Hitherto they have been extremely negligent in this respect. Perceiving this to be an important duty devolving upon the pastors of the churches, the General Association of Massachusetts, at their meeting in June, 1833, unanimously

“Resolved, That, in view of the immense want of ministers to supply the destitute churches of this country, and to meet the increasing and imperative demand of the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, and in view of the intimate and inseparable connection there is between the preaching of the gospel and the prosperity of every religious enterprise, it is the solemn duty of every minister to exert himself to find at least one young man, suitable to prepare for the ministrations of God’s word, and to induce him to commence immediately a course of education for the ministry.”

The same resolution has been adopted by other ministerial bodies.

At the annual meeting of the General Conference of the churches in Maine, in 1836, the following resolution was unanimously passed :

“Resolved, That the ministers connected with this General Conference be requested to mention in their statistical returns annually made to this

body, the number of young men in their churches under twenty-five years of age."

This resolution, too, has been adopted by other ministerial bodies, and it ought to be adopted and carried into effect by all similar associations, that it may be ascertained how many young men there are in the churches of suitable age to prepare for the ministry, in order that an approximate calculation may be made what number ought to prepare for this sacred work. The raising up of heralds of salvation is one of the greatest works the church is called to perform.

And now, dear brethren, be induced by the glory of God, the worth of precious and immortal souls, and the responsibility which the great Head of the church has imposed upon you, to engage with all suitable earnestness in the important work of educating pious young men to prepare for the ministry. But you may ask, What can we do?

1. You can read, and meditate on this subject, that you may think and feel aright.

Much has been written on topics of this nature, and printed in periodicals and pamphlets which should be perused. You will do well to consult particularly the American Quarterly Register—a work having specially in view the education of young men for the ministry. No person will act,

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till he has knowledge on the subject about which he is called to act. Knowledge will help him to act aright, and action will lead him to seek knowledge.

Having obtained the requisite information, you can understandingly and with more appropriate feelings,

2. Offer to God your supplications for this cause.

Every part of the work of bringing forward young men to preach the gospel should be undertaken in prayer—prayer first, prayer last, prayer midst, prayer in faith, prayer unceasing. The prayer of a righteous man availeth much. No cause more imperatively demands the supplications of God's children than this, for it is furnishing the men who are to be the principal instrumentality in the conversion of this world to Jesus Christ; and the consummation of this will be hastened or retarded very much according to the character of the men engaged in its advancement. You should then, especially remember this cause weekly, on Tuesday morning and evening, in your social devotions. The Monthly Concert on Tuesday immediately succeeding the first Monday in the month—the day when prayer is wont to be made in relation to this subject, should never be for-

gotten. The Annual Concert of Prayer on behalf of colleges should be particularly observed by you. This is a memorable time for our literary institutions, and should ever be anticipated as a Pentecostal season.

3. You can converse with all those young men with whom you come in contact who are proper persons to prepare for the Christian ministry.

You can tell them the woes and wants of a sinful and lost world; that the fields are white already to harvest, but the laborers few, and excite in them a missionary spirit. You can tell them not only the present wants of this country and of the world, but also that our 15,000,000 of inhabitants will soon become a 100,000,000, and that the 600,000,000 in Pagan and Mohammedan countries will soon amount to 1,000,000,000. The more this subject is contemplated, the more oppressive to the soul it becomes. You can tell them that, under the Mosaic law, there was an entire tribe set apart to the ministry—some writers suppose as many as one minister to every 350 souls. And you should not fail to deliver your message to all who ought to receive it. Let them hear you state, too, in the language of the Nineteenth Annual Report of the American Education Society, that “there are now, in the United States,

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1,900,000 males between 14 and 30 years of age. One in 15, or 126,000, may be considered pious. One in 10, or 12,600, ought to prepare for the ministry. Of these 12,600 males, there are 8,400 between the age of 14 and of 24. These, generally speaking, ought to take a regular collegiate and theological course to qualify themselves for the ministry. Of these, also, 2,940 are between the age of 24 and of 28. These, probably, ought to take a shorter course of education, that is, attend to the study of the languages and other important branches two or three years at some academy, and then pursue the study of divinity regularly at some theological seminary. And of this class, too, there are between the age of 28 and of 30, 1,260, who, by reason of their advanced age, ought not to pass through a regular course of education either at college or at a theological seminary, but to study divinity with some private clergyman, a year or two, and then enter upon the ministry of Christ. If there should be any subtraction from this number on account of domestic connection, or peculiar engagements in secular concerns, (as perhaps there should be,) this subtraction may be supplied from those over 30 years of age, who ought, in this way, to prepare for the ministry. Some few of those who entered on the work of preaching the gospel

at this time of life, have become eminent in their profession, as John Newton and others. Of the 12,600, not 4,000—not one third—are preparing to preach the gospel of Christ!”

And, having presented for their consideration communications like the above, make strong appeals to their consciences and hearts, and close by some pungent interrogatories, as the following : Have you thought on this subject as you ought to think? Have you exerted yourselves sufficiently to become acquainted with the spiritual necessities of millions in our own country, and of hundreds of millions in heathen lands? Have you felt on this subject as you ought to feel? Have you had one hour of distress, one sleepless night on account of the impending perdition of those who have no knowledge of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ? Have you prayed to God on this subject to afford you light, and guidance? Has it been your supplication, Lord what wilt thou have me to do in this thing? And have you been disposed to say in your hearts, Here, Lord, are we, send us, if it be thy pleasure? And can you now appeal to the Searcher of hearts and say, I have been willing, and I still am willing to preach the gospel, if the Lord would indicate it to be his desire that I should?

Dearly beloved brethren in Christ, bought by his blood, renovated by his Spirit, and consecrated to him and his cause, thus exert yourselves ; and your influence shall be felt generation after generation down to the millennial day, and onward till the consummation of all things, and the object you shall accomplish on earth, shall be the admiration of saints and angels eternally in heaven.

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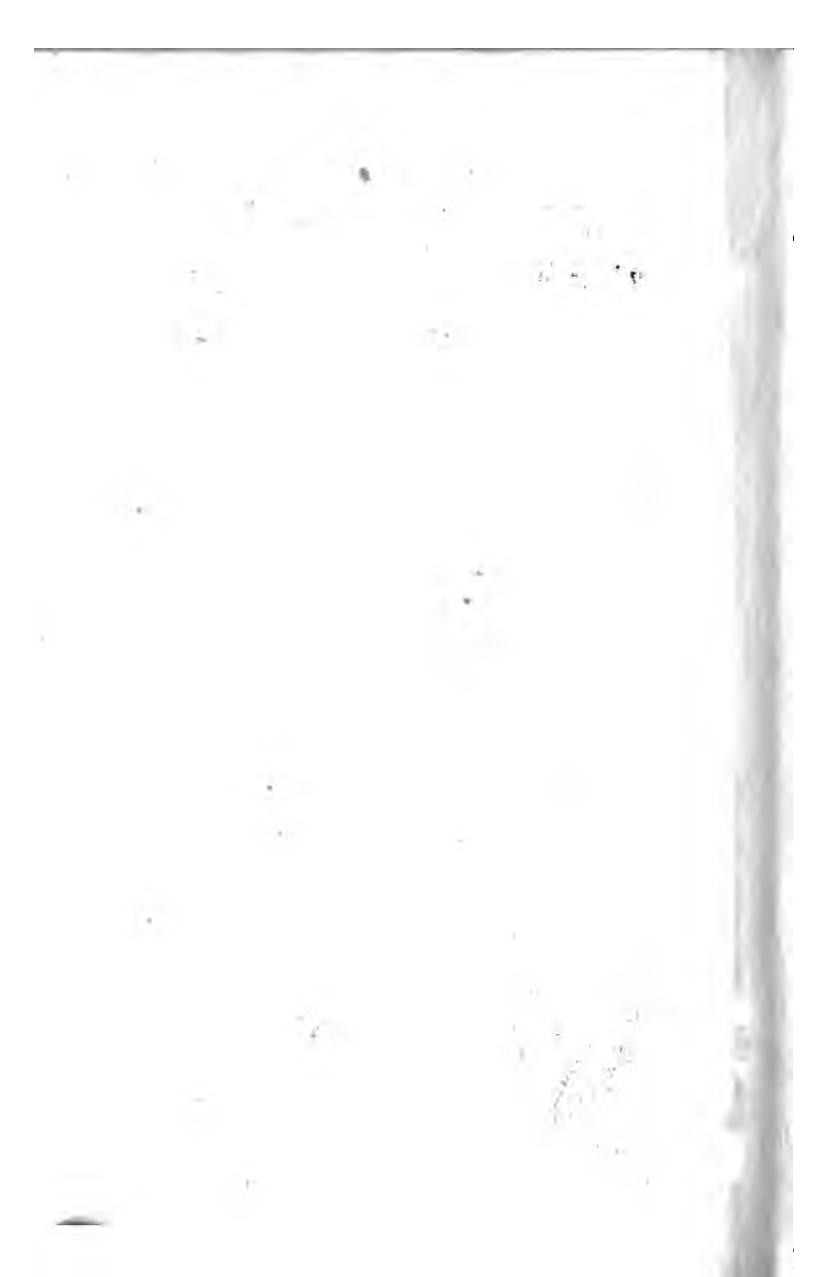
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